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Construction of additional conference facilities at the Vienna International Centre, and construction of additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In section X of its resolution 62/238, the General Assembly took note with appreciation of the efforts of the Government of Austria, as host country, to construct conference facilities at the Vienna International Centre. Part one of the present report provides information on progress made in the construction of additional conference facilities at the Vienna International Centre since the issuance of the last report of the Secretary-General (A/62/358).

Part two relates to the current status of the project for the construction of additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa. It is recalled that the General Assembly, by its resolutions 56/270, 60/248 and 62/238, had approved this project at a total estimated cost of $14,333,100. In accordance with the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/270, the present report provides information on the progress made in the implementation of the project since the issuance of the previous report of the Secretary-General (A/62/487).

* A/63/150 and Corr.1.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in two parts. The first part deals with the construction of additional conference facilities at the Vienna International Centre, while the second part addresses the construction of additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in Addis Ababa.

2. With regard to part one, in section X of its resolution 62/238, the General Assembly took note with appreciation of the efforts by the Government of Austria, as host country, to construct conference facilities at the Vienna International Centre, as detailed in the last report of the Secretary-General (A/62/358). It also endorsed the related observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (see A/62/7/Add.9). Part one of the present report outlines the current status of the project and progress to date since the issuance of the last report of the Secretary-General.

3. Part two of the report relates to the current status of the project for the construction of additional office facilities at ECA in Addis Ababa. By its resolution 56/270, the General Assembly approved the project, with a total area of approximately 6,770 square metres, and the utilization of an amount of $7,711,800 for that purpose, to be financed from within the available balance of the construction-in-progress account. Subsequently, in section VII of its resolution 60/248, the Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/60/532) and endorsed the related recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/60/7/Add.21, para. 12) to expand the scope of the project to include the construction of two additional floors that would be completed simultaneously with the originally approved four floors. The total capacity of the new office facilities would be 9,550 square metres, at a total estimated project cost of $11,383,300. In section IX of its resolution 62/238, the General Assembly approved the report of the Secretary-General (A/62/487) and endorsed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/62/7/Add.11) for a total revised estimated project cost of $14,333,100. In accordance with the request of the Assembly in its resolution 56/270, progress reports are submitted to it on an annual basis. The present report provides information on the progress made in the implementation of the project since the issuance of the previous annual report of the Secretary-General.

II. Part one: construction of additional conference facilities at the Vienna International Centre

Status of development of the project

4. The building permit for the new conference facility (M building) at the Vienna International Centre was obtained in July 2006, and construction work began in late August 2006. The construction will be completed in the second half of 2008. The official inauguration ceremony for the new building, organized and hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Austria and the City of Vienna, was held on 25 April 2008 and was attended by the Secretary-General. The implementation of certain installations included in the original design will take place after the M building is handed over to the organizations based at the Vienna International Centre by the host Government. While this situation is not ideal, it is anticipated that this will not

cause disruption in the provision of meeting services. Movement into the M building as swing space for the period of asbestos removal in the C building is scheduled for 2008. This includes moving conference servicing equipment from the C building and eventually all meeting activities to the M building. Since the move will take place during the busy meeting season in the Vienna International Centre, some inconvenience for participants can be anticipated, although efforts will be made by conference services staff and other support services to make it as smooth as possible. Following completion of the asbestos removal and refurbishment project, it is envisaged that the M and C buildings will be used by the four organizations based at the Vienna International Centre, namely, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nations Office at Vienna, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO).

United Nations contribution to the construction of additional conference facilities at the Vienna International Centre

5. Under the terms of a memorandum of understanding signed on 18 October 2004, which set a ceiling of €52.5 million for the construction of additional conference facilities, the four organizations based at the Vienna International Centre (IAEA, UNIDO, CTBTO and the United Nations Office at Vienna) would collectively contribute €2.5 million using the cost-sharing ratios based on the projected utilization of the new conference facilities. The United Nations share of the contribution is set at 4 per cent (€100,000) and included in the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 under section 32, Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance.

Maintenance costs of the additional conference facilities at the Vienna International Centre

6. No additional operational and maintenance costs are anticipated for the period during which the new facility is used as swing space when the removal of asbestos from and refurbishment of the existing conference building (C building) are in progress. Once the asbestos removal project is completed, it will be necessary for the organizations based at the Vienna International Centre to share the additional maintenance and operational costs relating to the utilization of the building, as well as additional security and safety costs in order to meet headquarters minimum operating security standards. The present cost-sharing formula, which is based on actual usage of space, will be applied to apportion the costs among the four organizations for their utilization of the entirety of the conference facilities available at the Vienna International Centre (i.e., the C and M buildings combined). The related financial requirements will be dealt with in conjunction with other common support costs in the context of the proposed programme budget for the relevant biennium. The M building, being a new building with many cost-saving features, is expected to be less expensive to maintain than other buildings at the Vienna International Centre. Nevertheless, since the conference capacity will be taken as a combined whole, all the organizations based at the Vienna International Centre will benefit proportionately from the M building's efficiency features.

Asbestos removal project

7. The asbestos removal work at the Vienna International Centre, which began in November 2004, will continue during the biennium 2008-2009 and beyond. All direct costs related to the removal of asbestos are to be borne by the host Government. Asbestos removal in the A, B, D and E buildings of the Vienna International Centre has been completed. The removal is progressing in the F and G building, the main components of which should be completed by the end of 2008, while other special areas in the non-office areas in the basements are to be completed by the end of 2009. The start of asbestos removal in the C building depends on the transfer of all meetings-related activities to the M building. The C building will be closed for a prolonged period of time, during which conference equipment is to be upgraded. Accordingly, the total project plan is expected to be completed by mid-2011. During the time of the asbestos removal in the C building, the organizations based at the Vienna International Centre will share the M building as a conference facility. Peak meeting periods will require the use of additional facilities, such as the Austria Centre Vienna, which Austria, the host country, provides. It is anticipated that such additional facilities will be required only exceptionally once both the M and C buildings are fully functional.

III. Part two: construction of additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa

Host country addendum for duty-free and tax-free status and site works

8. In his previous annual report (A/62/487), the Secretary-General informed the General Assembly that the addendum to the host country agreement had been signed by the host country Government and the United Nations. The addendum gives ECA rights to the duty-free and tax-free import of services and materials and other related privileges that will allow the efficient and cost-effective implementation of the project. However, the host country has recently announced, in their Directive No. 24/2008, that customs duties and related value added tax (15 per cent) are to be paid up front and would then be reimbursed after applicable customs declarations and clearances have been processed. ECA is presently negotiating with the local authorities to waive this requirement, as is typical for construction projects of this magnitude.

9. ECA continues to collaborate with the local authorities on the construction of the alternate public access road, which includes the removal of the storm drain and relocation of service utilities. ECA has had formal communications and meetings with local authorities on those relocations, and the Addis Ababa municipality remains positive as to their timely removal and relocation. However, there are as yet no actual works on site to this effect. As already indicated by the Secretary-General in his previous report, in the event that the access road is not relocated prior to the start of construction, it will be necessary for ECA to build a temporary road, which would be an additional cost to the United Nations.

Status of development of the project

10. The final amendments to the contract with the international architect were signed on 13 June 2007, and the architect submitted construction drawings at the

end of August 2007. However, following an in-depth review by the Facilities Management Services in ECA and at United Nations Headquarters, the drawings required further revisions, and the revised documents were accepted in December 2007 from the international architect as part of the final contract negotiations. The construction documents were received in January 2008, which enabled the United Nations to hire a local architect to continue the work. The construction tender was initiated shortly thereafter, and the final tender was issued on 20 May 2008. A bidders' conference was held in Addis Ababa on 6 June 2008. Owing to multiple requests from bidders that the submission date be extended in conjunction with the closure of factories in Europe during the month of August, the original bid submission date was extended by six weeks to 12 September 2008. Following the receipt of the bid submissions, technical and financial evaluations and contract negotiations will be conducted. It is expected that the contract will be awarded in December 2008 and that the construction work will commence immediately thereafter.

11. With regard to the local contract referred to above, owing to all the difficulties encountered in coordination with the international architect as outlined by the Secretary-General in his report (A/62/487), the local architect was selected in December 2007 to oversee the day-to-day construction management of the project. The contract was signed in July 2008.

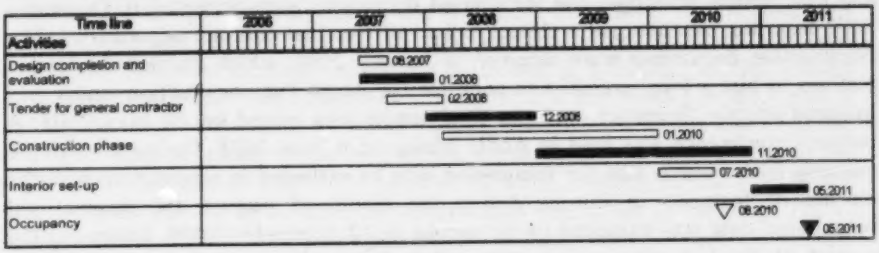
12. In October 2007, an expression of interest, followed by a tender, was issued for a quantity surveyor service. Only one company submitted a proposal, but it was rejected since the cost for their services far exceeded the budgeted amount for the project. A part-time local quantity surveyor service is in the process of being evaluated as part of an existing contract that the United Nations Office at Nairobi has in place with local United Nations approved quantity surveyor services. The part-time quantity surveyor will report directly to the Facilities Management Service at Headquarters to ensure independent control over the various aspects of the construction, including verification of the contractors' invoices.

13. As outlined by the Secretary-General in his report, and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/238, a supplemental parking structure was approved to be incorporated onto the land provided to the United Nations by the host country. With the recent signing of the local architect's contract, a study can now begin on the incorporation of this structure and the associated landscaping in relation to the new office building.

Project schedule

14. Owing to delays in the final negotiations with the international architect in November and December 2007, the issuance of the revised construction documents, the required in-depth coordination of the tender documents, and the extension of the bid submission date, a revision of the project schedule has accordingly been necessary as outlined in the table below. The building is now expected to be completed in November 2010 instead of January 2010, followed by interior set-up of approximately six months duration.

Revised project schedule for the additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa



Legend :

Project schedule envisaged in the report of the Secretary-General (A/62/487)

Current revised project schedule

Parking policy

15. In accordance with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/62/7/Add.11, para. 9), in 2007 ECA reviewed the possibility of implementing a parking fee policy to become effective in January 2008. The policy is now being finalized for implementation in October 2008. As noted in the last annual report of the Secretary-General, once the policy is in effect, it is expected to generate $54,000 per year based on the current parking capacity of 600 cars (half of which will be designated for free use), and $172,800 per year after the supplementary parking facility, with capacity for 660 cars, is completed. Income generated from parking fees will be credited to Income section 2 of the proposed programme budget in this and following bienniums.

IV. Actions to be taken by the General Assembly

16. **The General Assembly may wish to take note of the present progress report.**

Annex

Detailed cost plan for additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa

(United States dollars)

			Projected expenditure			
	Total amount	*Expenditure as at 30 June 2008*	*July-December 2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*
Approved by resolutions 56/270 and 60/248						
Construction costs	7 488 600	9 050	1 488 670	3 369 870	2 489 959	131 051
Design, consultancy services and project coordination	2 102 233	1 207 725	138 330	332 288	298 580	125 310
Site works	1 153 300	29 110	—	899 352	224 838	—
Workstations and furniture	262 800	—	—	—	—	262 800
Contingencies	376 367	—	—	188 183	188 184	—
Approved in the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009						
Installation of information technology and telephone equipment	1 100 000	—	—	—	880 000	220 000
Approved by resolution 62/238						
Safety and security	759 800	—	—	409 800	350 000	—
Internal access roads	130 000	—	—	45 500	45 500	39 000
Parking and landscaping	660 000	—	—	132 000	264 000	264 000
Generators and generator house	300 000	—	—	150 000	150 000	—
Total	**14 333 100**	**1 245 885**	**1 627 000**	**5 526 993**	**4 891 061**	**1 042 161**

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Sixty-third session
Item 52 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Sustainable development

Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 62/189, provides an update on actions taken by Governments, organizations of the United Nations system and major groups in advancing the implementation of sustainable development goals and targets, including through partnerships for sustainable development.

The international community is currently tackling multiple challenges arising from the food and energy crises and climate change. These challenges, which are interlinked, adversely affect the most vulnerable populations and impede progress towards the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. It is therefore necessary to act in an integrated and coordinated manner at all levels in order to alleviate the impact of these crises. It is also important to continue on the overall path of sustainable development through integrating the principles of sustainable development in all development strategies.

The present report provides an update on the activities of Governments and other stakeholders in this field. Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and major groups should stay on track in implementing these goals, while aiming for accelerated progress.

* A/63/150 and Corr.1.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 62/189, the General Assembly called for the effective implementation of the commitments, programmes and time-bound targets adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and for the fulfilment of the provisions relating to the means of implementation. as contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation; reiterated that the Commission on Sustainable Development is the high-level body responsible for sustainable development within the United Nations system, which serves as a forum for the consideration of issues related to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development; and emphasized the importance of a consensus outcome and action-oriented policy sessions.

2. In this regard, the General Assembly invited the relevant specialized agencies, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United Nations funds and programmes, the Global Environment Facility, international and regional financial and trade institutions, the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa and other relevant bodies to actively participate, within their mandates, in the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Assembly provided further guidance on the preparations for the sixteenth session of the Commission.

3. The present report has been prepared pursuant to resolution 62/189 in order to provide an update on progress made in implementing that resolution. It should be read in conjunction with other reports submitted under the agenda item on sustainable development, including those related to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, including the report on matters relating to the small island developing States and the development of the Caribbean Sea for present and future generations.

II. Overview of new and emerging challenges

4. Currently, the international community is tackling multiple challenges arising from the food and energy crises and climate change. These challenges, which are interlinked, adversely affect the most vulnerable populations and impede progress towards the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. It is therefore necessary to act in an integrated and coordinated manner at all levels in order to alleviate the impact of these crises and to create global partnerships for their solution in both the short and long-term.

5. According to FAO, the number of hungry people increased by about 50 million in 2007 as a result of high food prices. A new study by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) pointed out that: higher food prices have cost a group of 33 net food-importing developing countries $2.3 billion since January 2007; in the same period, the effect of rising oil prices on 59 low-income net oil importers was $35.8 billion;

and annual food price inflation in 120 low-income and emerging market countries rose to 12 per cent at the end of March 2008 from 10 per cent three months earlier, while fuel prices accelerated to 9 per cent from 6.7 per cent over the same period. Poor countries that are highly dependent on food imports are particularly vulnerable to rising food prices. The share of household spending on food in emerging and developing economies typically exceeds 50 per cent.[1]

6. Two billion people living in drylands, areas that have the world's lowest per capita gross domestic product (GDP) and highest infant mortality, are especially vulnerable to further land degradation and declines in agricultural production. This has both physical and socio-economic consequences. Soil becomes less productive due to changes in its physical structure and biochemical composition. The World Bank estimates that annual income foregone in areas immediately affected by desertification amounts to approximately $42 billion each year at the global level. The indirect economic and social costs suffered outside affected areas, including the influx of "environmental refugees" and losses to national food production, may be much greater.

7. The report of the Secretary-General for the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development on agriculture (E/CN.17/2008/3) shows that domestic public expenditures by countries in their agricultural sectors have declined as a share of total public spending, from 11.3 per cent in 1980 to 6.7 per cent in 2002. Recent data indicate that for "agriculture-based countries" (14 in total, of which 12 are in sub-Saharan Africa), the share of public spending on agriculture amounted to about 4 per cent in 2004, down from 6.9 per cent in 1980. The share of spending on agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean has declined even further, perhaps to 2.5 per cent of total public expenditures in 2002 (from 8 per cent in 1980). The share of official development assistance (ODA) devoted to agriculture also fell from a high of about 18 per cent in 1979 to 3.5 per cent in 2004, while the volume of agricultural ODA fell from its high of about $8 billion in 1984 (in 2004 dollars) to $3.4 billion in 2004. At the same time, markets for value-added exports from developing countries have been restricted by high tariffs and low brand recognition in developed countries, and many developing country producers have been unable to meet the strict phytosanitary standards set in developed nations.

8. There is an urgent need, therefore, to help developing countries expand agricultural and food production, improve market access for agricultural products from developing countries and increase investment in agriculture, agribusiness and rural development from both public and private sources. In the report of the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development,[2] it is pointed out that agricultural productivity remained low in many countries and that agriculture was often sidelined even though it should be considered a crucial sector in national, regional and international efforts to reduce hunger and poverty and improve rural livelihoods. Insufficient investment in the agricultural sector from both public and private sources, domestic and international, was identified as a long-term constraint to increasing agricultural production. This has also been reaffirmed in the Declaration of the High-level conference on world food security: the challenges of climate change and bioenergy, adopted in Rome on 5 June 2008, which calls upon all donors and the organizations of the United Nations system to increase their

[1] See http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2008/NEW070108A.htm.

[2] See E/2008/29.

assistance for developing countries as an immediate measure, in particular those that are most negatively affected by food crisis, and to simultaneously start implementing medium and long-term measures in this regard.

9. In order to develop a comprehensive response, the organizations of the United Nations system have established a High-level Task Force on the Global Food Crisis, which has outlined a comprehensive framework for action[3] in order to help address the current food crisis, including strengthening assistance to smallholder farmers in the developing world, who are among the most vulnerable, through close partnerships at all levels by all stakeholders. The Task Force also pointed out that the current food crisis should be looked upon as an important chance for promoting agricultural and rural development in many low income food-deficit countries, led by the quick establishment of an enabling policy environment and a set of supportive measures.

10. Along with measures to tackle the food crisis, there should be action to address the negative impact of energy prices, which pose a heavy burden on the poor. Improving energy access for the 1.6 billion poor people without electricity and the 2.4 billion people lacking modern energy services for cooking and heating is crucial for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

11. Closely interlinked with the food and energy crises is climate change. Extreme weather events resulting from climate change in the form of prolonged droughts or severe floods are affecting water management and agricultural production, further increasing the costs of adaptation in developing countries.

12. The multiple challenges stemming from the food and energy crises and climate change have far-reaching economic, social and environmental implications and meeting these challenges will require a more integrated and balanced approach to economic, social and environmental policies tailored to each country's needs, more space for implementing counter-cyclical macroeconomic policies, greater international support for broader social protection schemes and more investment in environmental policies, multi-stakeholder dialogues, decision-making, monitoring and evaluation. It also requires mainstreaming the three pillars of sustainable development into national sustainable development strategies. As of February 2008, 82 countries have implemented development strategies, while an additional 16 countries have formulated, and will soon start implementing, them.

13. In many countries, Governments have applied the principles of sustainable development to the formulation of sector strategies as the current crises show the need for more investment in agriculture and rural development, together with prevention of land degradation, the development of locally relevant land tenure systems and the sustainable management of natural resources. Algeria, for example, has developed national plans for agricultural and rural development, to combat desertification and for forestation, the last two of which are essential components of its national sustainable development strategy.[4]

14. Gabon has established a national committee for food security and rural development and has enacted legislation for sustainable agriculture and investment in agriculture. In Tajikistan, the Government is ensuring food security and reducing

[3] See http://www.un.org/issues/food/taskforce/.

[4] See E/2008/29 in all instances when particular countries are mentioned.

poverty through the expansion and improvement of microcredits for agriculture, the rational use of available resources, increasing agricultural crops, the provision of high quality seeds to farmers, as well as mineral fertilizers and modernized equipment, and the modernization and rehabilitation of irrigation facilities.

15. Investing in agriculture has been recognized as a very important part of food security. Mexico, for example, is promoting the agricultural sector in a way that encourages a profitable and competitive performance, with long-term, sustainable development plans in social and economic areas, and is committed to the conservation of its natural resources.

16. Senegal has undertaken institutional (establishment of a high council for natural resources and environment), operational (establishment of a surveillance structure such as an ecological centre) and legal measures (adoption of a number of laws that regulate use of water and biodiversity) to combat desertification. Kenya has elaborated a 5-year programme through its "Vision 2030" to encourage sustainable management of its extensive drylands.

17. National economies depend upon the diversity of biological resources and the life-support functions and services they provide. Yet the rate of loss of biodiversity is greater today than at any time in the past. The irreversibility of species extinction and the loss of genetic strains, natural habitats and ecosystems through degradation and overexploitation compromise options for present and future generations. It is therefore vital to undertake environmental assessments in order to prevent the degradation and overexploitation of biodiversity.

18. In order to preserve biodiversity and sustainable forestry, some Governments have adopted innovative economic measures. In Lithuania, for example, land owners have been given grants to encourage and support sustainable land management. The increasing amount of territory of protected areas and forests and the growing number and areas of organic farms demonstrate that the measures have been effective. Forests currently amount to almost 33 per cent and protected areas total about 15 per cent of the territory of Lithuania. The Chinese Government has also implemented a number of major ecological projects, including the conversion of cultivated land into forest, the restoration of grazing land to grassland, the protection of natural forests and harnessing the energy of sandstorm sources.

III. Actions at the intergovernmental level

19. At the intergovernmental level, deliberations in the Economic and Social Council in 2008 focused on sustainable development challenges, including the state of the world economy and its implications for the achievement of the United Nations development goals. The Commission on Sustainable Development, at its review session in 2008, focused its work on the thematic cluster of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa.

A. Economic and Social Council

20. At its 2008 substantive session, held in New York from 30 June to 27 July, the Economic and Social Council focused its second annual ministerial review on implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to

sustainable development. The first Development Cooperation Forum, held by the Council on 30 June, focused on making development cooperation more coherent and more effective.

21. During its thematic debate, the Council also discussed an integrated approach to rural development, which provided a follow-up to the ministerial declaration of 2003, taking into account new developments, including the global food crisis and the role of bioenergy. The Council adopted a ministerial declaration underlining the multiple challenges to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including financial instability and uncertainty, slowing global economic growth and rising food and fuel prices, as well as the impacts of environmental degradation and climate change.

22. The ministers, recognizing the increasing rate of deterioration of the global environment in many significant areas, the continued challenges of environmental protection and the serious implications for sustainable development, strongly stressed the need to address critical issues of long-term global sustainability, taking into account the Rio principles, including, inter alia, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The ministers reaffirmed the importance of investing in infrastructure for rural development and agriculture, recognized the in-depth discussion at the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and looked forward to recommendations of the Commission at its seventeenth session, which will advance rural development. They also reiterated the urgency of accelerating progress on the implementation of the priorities for action in water, sanitation and human settlements, agreed upon at the thirteenth session of the Commission, through integrating water and sanitation strategies into national development plans.

B. Outcome of the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

23. The sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, a review session, focused on identifying barriers, constraints, lessons learned and best practices in implementation in the thematic cluster of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. Its outcome was a Chairman's summary, consisting of a thematic review and a high-level segment.[5] Participants carried out a broad-based and balanced review of the six thematic issues, while highlighting interlinkages among the issues that reflected the unique strength of the Commission in addressing both sectoral and cross-cutting issues.

24. Many countries pointed out that poverty eradication remains a global priority and an overarching objective of sustainable development which will not be achieved unless decisions on sustainable agriculture and rural development are implemented and efforts to combat drought and desertification are scaled up through changing production and consumption patterns and reducing deforestation and forest degradation.

25. Among the most often cited concerns was the food crisis. Many countries mentioned the deleterious effects on poor populations and the risk of a swift reversal of the progress made in reducing poverty and hunger. Agricultural productivity must

[5] See E/2008/29, para. 157.

be increased to meet the long-term rising trend in the demand for food. Investment in the sector needs to be enhanced. At the same time, agricultural practices must be adapted to accommodate better land and soil management. Effective means must be found so that scientific and technological advances may reach small farmers through improved extensive services, including e-extension. The paramount role of women in agricultural production must be better recognized and they must be involved in the development of measures to boost productivity and sustainability.

26. Climate change and adaptation to climate change in relation to agriculture were mentioned by many participants. Climate change is expected to affect water resources and to have a strong impact on drought and desertification. For some speakers it is the most urgent challenge faced by African countries, small island developing States and least developed countries, whose economies are dependent on activities affected by climate.

27. Many countries underscored the need for more financial resources, transfer of technology and know-how and capacity-building — the means of implementation — as the most crucial cross-cutting issue necessary for sustainable development. They called on the international community to fulfil its commitments in those areas, including those made in the Monterrey Consensus, pointing out that developing countries need more funding in adapting to the effects of climate change.

28. The use of food crops for producing biofuels has been a source of concern to many countries, some of which pointed out that biofuels can help overcome fossil fuel dependency and provide employment opportunities if their production meets sustainability criteria.

29. In discussions it was revealed that the onset of the food crisis was threatening gains made in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Africa: it reduced the affordability of food for the poor and led to a diversion of budgetary resources from other priority needs. Regional trade integration could help by permitting the production of farm inputs at a scale economic for regional markets. At the international level, however, Africa continued to face constraints from the global trade system owing to lack of market access for African agricultural products.

30. During the review of the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action, concern was expressed at the slow rate of implementation. It was noted that, while the small island developing States themselves had made some progress at the national and regional levels in building institutional capacity for sustainable development, formulating strategies and action plans and carrying out policy reforms, many continued to encounter constraints impeding their progress towards sustainable development, including limited technical, financial and human resources. The need to reverse the downward trend in international financial flows to the small island developing States, including official development assistance, the need to improve terms of trade, facilitate the transfer of appropriate technology and strengthen capacity-building in support of their efforts to adapt to climate change were also highlighted.

31. Various aspects related to the subject of water and sanitation were addressed during the review of the relevant decisions adopted by the Commission at its thirteenth session, including the importance of global and national monitoring of the

sector at all levels; the need for reliable data supported by improved knowledge and research; transfer of technology; and capacity-building. The importance of water governance and a participatory approach to water and sanitation; the role of partnerships, including public-private partnerships; and the importance of strengthening water utilities to extend the provision of services were also emphasized. Many countries pointed to limited financial resources as the main constraint to the achievement of the goals in this sector.

32. During the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, some 1,000 participants attended learning centre courses and took part in partnerships fair activities, benefiting from the Commission's capacity-building activities. The large variety of intellectually stimulating side events and parallel events (over 100 such events were organized) enriched the programme of activities.[6] The panel discussions throughout the session and at the ministerial dialogue were also well attended, providing opportunities for sharing experiences on the ground, lessons learned and best practices. The dynamics of these dialogue sessions once again demonstrated the value of the Commission as the only truly intergovernmental forum that deals with the linkages among the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. As at all previous sessions, the participation of the major groups and partnerships provided added value to the work of the Commission. Delegations also expressed their satisfaction with the Commission's matrix, which was considered to be a useful way of organizing information and sharing good practices.

IV. Implementation by the United Nations system

33. As the official United Nations mechanism for follow-up to the water-related decisions reached at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Millennium Development Goals, UN-Water continued its work in all aspects related to water and sanitation in 2008, including the preparation of a status report on integrated water resources management and a water efficiency plan for the Commission's sixteenth session. UN-Water also launched a status report on integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans for efficient, equitable and sustainable development and management of the world's limited water resources and for coping with conflicting demands.

34. As a coordinator of the decade "Water for Life": 2005-2015, UN-Water continued working on the decade's central themes: scarcity, access to sanitation and health, water and gender, capacity-building, financing, valuation, integrated water resources management, environment and biodiversity, disaster prevention, food and agriculture. It also continued coordinating various activities for the International Year of Sanitation 2008.

35. The Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs organized a Caribbean workshop on sanitation, "Integration of sanitation policies into national development plans in the Caribbean region", held in Kingston on 28 and 29 April 2008. The objective of the workshop was to contribute to the improvement of the well-being of the population in the region through the

[6] See http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd16/sideevents/highlights.pdf.

integration and development of sanitation policies into sustainable development strategies and to share best practices and identify solutions appropriate to the region.

36. As an inter-agency network to help ensure coherence in the multidisciplinary response of the United Nations system to decisions taken at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in the area of energy, UN-Energy has continued to serve as a gateway for sharing information, knowledge, experiences and good practices as well as initiatives in energy-related activities. Its work is organized around three clusters: energy access, energy efficiency and renewable energy. The renewable energy cluster has continued its work to prepare an informational guideline paper for bioenergy policymakers. The energy access cluster has been working on a publication entitled "Energy services for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals: progress, challenges and priority actions" which will be launched at the High-level event of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals on 25 September 2008.

37. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) lends its support to nuclear power programmes, covering all stages of the fuel cycle. As a member of the UN-Energy, IAEA demonstrates the analytical usefulness of its analysis and planning tools for energy-environment policy analysis. It provides information on the advantages of nuclear power, including with respect to actions to combat climate change.

38. In 2007, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), together with UNEP, launched the joint poverty-environment initiative in Nairobi. The initiative has provided both agencies with additional opportunities to promote the links between fighting poverty and protecting the environment. UNDP also launched its Millennium Development Goal Carbon Facility in June as an innovative way to harness the vast resources of the carbon market to bring long-term sustainable development to developing countries through an agreement with the banking and insurance company Fortis.

39. In September 2007, UNDP marked the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. UNDP will continue to play a key role in efforts to assist developing countries to meet their compliance targets under the Protocol. In November 2007, UNDP launched the *Human Development Report 2007* on the subject of climate change. The report noted that regions with the smallest carbon emissions will be the hardest hit by climate change and will have the most difficulty coping with its impact.

40. UNDP also launched a major initiative to mainstream climate change risk into its programmes to support Governments in "climate-proofing" their development plans and to help ensure that the interests of the most vulnerable countries and people are reflected in the climate change negotiations.

41. UNDP has taken a leading role in the preparation of the guidelines of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee on applying strategic environmental assessment at the national level. UNDP has also developed its capacity through the integrated drylands development programme, which resulted in the mainstreaming of drylands issues and priorities into national policies, development planning frameworks, poverty reduction strategies and budgetary systems in 19 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab States.

42. The work of UNDP in the area of biodiversity has supported capacity development, knowledge management, policy advice and advocacy efforts. Through global advocacy and analysis, the UNDP Biodiversity Global Programme has assisted developing countries and communities in influencing national and global policies, benefiting from knowledge on biodiversity, and advancing their sustainable development and poverty reduction goals. UNDP has also supported a significant amount of work related to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

43. The Convention on Biological Diversity has made significant contributions to the implementation of Agenda 21, specifically chapters 15 and 16. This progress has been driven by the strengths of the near universal membership to the Convention, a comprehensive and science-driven mandate and international financial support for national projects. At the ninth meeting of the Convention of the Parties in Bonn in May 2008, 64 countries announced their promotion of additional marine and terrestrial protected areas for the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention. The secretariat of the Convention will continue to work with partners in the United Nations system in the celebration of the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity.

44. UNICEF continues its work on water and sanitation through the joint monitoring programme for drinking-water supply and sanitation, with special focus on providing safe sanitation coverage. UNICEF has also continued with its "WASH1in school", initiative to ensure that children have access to safe water and clean, separate sanitation facilities in primary schools.

45. The Conference of the Parties has called for a special high-level event on the eve of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly in 2010. It is also expected that, at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Nagoya in 2010, the Parties to the Convention will adopt not only targets for the reduction of the rate of biodiversity loss beyond 2010, but also landmark international regimes on access to genetic resources, the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from their use, and liability and redress under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. A report on the economic value of biodiversity is being prepared for that event.

46. The United Nations World Tourism Organization, working to improve the contribution of tourism to the sustainable development goals, has published and circulated guidebooks on the application of indicators of sustainable development for tourism destinations. A number of capacity-building workshops for their practical application have been held in several countries. As the tourism sector of developing countries and small island developing States is particularly vulnerable to the direct impacts of climate change, the Organization is investing in scientific research, capacity-building and awareness-raising efforts, in cooperation with other international, national and private sector stakeholders.

47. Since 2002, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has introduced a range of initiatives, including the environmental partnership proposals on the management of ballast water (GloBallast), the Marine Electronic Highway project for the Malacca and Singapore Straits and three new initiatives proposed by the organization Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia. It has also adopted a high-level action plan and priorities, with the aim of enhancing maritime safety and protecting the marine environment from pollution, thereby ensuring that the objectives of the World Summit on Sustainable Development are continuously pursued.

48. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has placed increasing emphasis on addressing the global impact of aircraft engine emissions. To that end, it has established the Group on International Aviation and Climate Change and provided information on ICAO activities and aviation emissions. ICAO is participating in the "greening of the United Nations" and, to that end, has launched the ICAO Carbon Emissions Calculator for use in carbon-offsetting programmes. The calculator is an internationally approved impartial web-based tool to estimate the amount of carbon dioxide emissions from a given flight.

49. The United Nations University has continued to contribute to education for sustainable development through the regional centres of expertise initiative launched in 2004 as part of the University's response to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. The centres, in 55 locations around the world, bring together representatives of institutions of higher education, civil society, governmental and business organizations and non-governmental organizations seeking to translate global goals of the decade into local realities. In November 2007, the University's Institute of Advanced Studies launched a new initiative, Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research Network (ProSPER.Net), with 18 universities in the Asia-Pacific region. The initiative promotes activities in the areas of curriculum development, public policy and sustainable development, integration of sustainable development in business school curricula and training on sustainable development for educators and researchers.

V. Regional activities

50. The United Nations regional commissions and offices, regional development banks and other regional organizations continue their efforts to expedite the regional implementation of sustainable development goals and targets. They have also made important contributions to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

51. In collaboration with the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and relevant regional and subregional organizations, the five regional commissions organized ministerial-level regional implementation meetings as inputs to the sixteenth session of the Commission. The regional implementation meeting for Africa was held in Addis Ababa in October 2007; the regional implementation meeting for Western Asia was held in Cairo in October 2007; the regional implementation meeting for Asia and the Pacific was held in Jakarta in November 2007; the regional implementation meeting for the Latin America and Caribbean was held in Santiago in November 2007; and the regional implementation meeting for Europe was held in Geneva in January 2008. The meetings focused on the regional specificities and regional cooperation regarding the Commission's thematic cluster: agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa.[7] They provided very useful input to the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development by highlighting regional perspectives on progress made in implementing sustainable development goals related to the themes of the Session.

[7] See http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/rim.htm.

52. The regional commissions have continued to mainstream the subject of sustainable development into their work. The Economic Commission for Africa and the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification signed a memorandum of understanding in March 2008 aimed at enhancing collaboration in implementing the Convention, notably in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification. It will be implemented within inter-agency coordination at the regional and subregional levels, including interaction with the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank.

53. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia assisted countries in the region in formulating and adopting policies and measures and introducing mechanisms to improve sustainable resource use and management of energy and developed programmes for improving the energy sector sustainability for increasing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. The Commission also carried out a series of activities to enhance the capabilities of member countries in the implementation of integrated water resource management at national, local and regional levels, targeting stakeholders from the public and private sectors and civil society.

54. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and UNDP launched a regional report on Millennium Development Goals in April 2008, the third regional report on the Goals. The report highlights existing and potential challenges in achieving the Goals in Asia and the Pacific region, which is home to two thirds of the global poor. The report underscores the need for better coordination between international organizations in the region and countries wishing to achieve the Goals and for a regional road map that all development partners could use in those efforts.

55. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean has created a network to disseminate successful experiences in achieving the Goals. Launched in June 2008, to date, it has recorded over 100 activities carried out by 48 governmental and non-governmental institutions in 17 Latin American countries. In order to present the most significant initiatives, seminars are held in South America, Central America and the Caribbean, where the programme results are evaluated and participants analyse the feasibility of implementing them in other countries. The project also includes the financing of internships so that professionals interested in replicating programmes may be able to see how they operate in person.

56. The Economic Commission for Europe continues its efforts towards improving the environment in the region through its five environmental conventions and their subsequent protocols. The environmental performance reviews of countries with economies in transition take into account progress towards the targets and goals set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals as they relate to national environmental management. In addition, the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the "Environment for Europe", a pan-European political framework that brings together environment ministers and major stakeholders, was held in Belgrade in October 2007. The Conference addressed issues such as sustainable production and consumption patterns, sustainable energy policies, education for sustainable development and biological diversity.

VI. Major groups

57. The role of the major groups in sustainable development has grown and shifted in a number of significant ways since the World Summit on Sustainable Development. As timely progress in meeting sustainable development goals and targets becomes more urgent, major groups are succeeding in implementing innovative policies and programmes in partnership with Governments and others, and increasingly, their contributions to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development are anticipated as being informative and useful in providing a comprehensive review of where challenges and obstacles remain. Major groups are now in a position of increasing responsibility and leadership as partners in implementation activities, and their presence on Government delegations is also becoming more common, especially with regard to the youth sector.

58. As actors on the ground, representatives of major groups are making progress in implementing projects related to the thematic issues addressed in the Commission's multi-year programme of work, while simultaneously addressing cross-cutting issues such as poverty eradication, education, health and gender equality. They are called upon to share their practical experiences and field knowledge in the implementation of the commitments, goals and targets specific to the cycle's thematic cluster by submitting official discussion papers, background papers and case studies as input to the database and the matrix of informational tools developed by the Commission's secretariat.

59. The current focus of the Commission's cycle, agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa, has already elicited valuable contributions, complementary to the official reports, from specific sectors, including: the multi-stakeholder-driven sustainable agriculture and rural development initiative, whose progress is detailed in a background paper[8] as a successful partnership for sustainable agriculture and rural development; a background paper[9] produced by a consortium of non-governmental organizations active in Africa outlining obstacles and constraints to implementing sustainable development in the region; and a background paper prepared by indigenous peoples on the current thematic cluster.[10] The visibility and effectiveness of indigenous peoples' efforts to implement sustainable development principles has also been enhanced by the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the General Assembly in 2007.[11]

60. It is clear that major groups must be fully engaged and included in decision-making processes to ensure the achievement of the sustainable development goals. To that end, the Commission renewed its effort at its sixteenth session to inspire practical and dynamic dialogue among different stakeholders by organizing an interactive dialogue among major groups, Governments and representatives of registered partnerships for sustainable development. It was the first time since the World Summit on Sustainable Development that major groups and representatives of partnerships for sustainable development conversed in a plenary meeting with Governments regarding their efforts to support implementation, and the rich

[8] See http://www.un.org/esa.sustdev/csd/csd16/documents/bp5_2008.pdf.

[9] See http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/documents/bp3_2008.pdf.

[10] See http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/mg/ipafrica.pdf.

[11] Resolution 61/295, annex.

exchange of views revealed the unique traits of partnerships while identifying key characteristics for their effective functioning on the ground and discussing the impediments to progress.

61. More broadly, substantive exchanges between representatives of major groups and Government officials are increasing, and are now integrated throughout the official review session, including through multi-stakeholder dialogues, interactive discussions and round tables within the high-level segment, and participation in thematic and regional discussions, including those related to island developing States. Experts from major groups also served as panellists in many of these discussions. More than 700 representatives, from 126 organizations, from 68 countries participated in the sixteenth session. The level of interaction was very high, with major groups making a total of 152 interventions, a record number for any meeting of the Commission. A number of obstacles and constraints were identified and experiences and lessons learned exchanged.

62. In preparation for the sixteenth session, major groups participated in the five regional implementation meetings organized by the regional commissions in order to promote effective consideration of regional and subregional inputs throughout the two-year cycle. Leading organizations held a number of additional regional and subregional intersessional meetings and strengthened the collaboration between the major groups by liaising with Governments of the region and coordinating their strategies.

63. Major groups were active in the Partnerships Fair, the Learning Centre and the many side events that took place during the sixteenth session. To complement the session's official programme of activities, a number of events were organized by major groups before and during the meeting, including: orientation meetings for all participating major groups; a "youth blast" for younger participants; and a series of weekend events entitled "City and farm linkages: food system tours and learning events in New York", through which the Commission organized tours of local farms and markets and provided a format for symposia and workshops open to both civil society and Governments.[12]

64. Supporting the participation of major groups in the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development continues to be a challenge, particularly as major groups from developing countries and countries with economies in transition are expected to increase the level of their participation. Future success will depend on our collective ability to guide their sustained engagement and increase support for "process work", which would amplify the number and diversity of major groups that inform the Commission on Sustainable Development prior to and during its deliberations.

VII. Partnerships for sustainable development

65. Voluntary multi-stakeholder partnerships working towards sustainable development goals have proved to be an important complementary outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and a viable implementation mechanism. As stressed at the World Summit, these partnerships are not a substitute for Government responsibilities and commitments; they are intended to strengthen

[12] See http://un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/mg/in_session.htm.

implementation by involving all those stakeholders who can make a contribution to sustainable development.

66. Partnerships have continued to develop and grow. There appears to be a wide acceptance that partnerships are now embedded in the international sustainable development dialogue and have become an integral part of the work of the United Nations system. By collaborating across all levels, pooling skills, and resources, developing innovative policy and technical and financing solutions to overcome barriers to sustainable development, such partnerships continue to demonstrate their impact, make concrete contributions to the implementation of internationally agreed sustainable development goals and commitments and deliver results on the ground. New partnerships are registered with the Commission secretariat. A majority of registered partnerships are operational, and have reported on progress made in pilot projects and activities. At the same time, many of these initiatives are evolving, taking on new partners and building alliances with other partnerships working in complementary areas.

67. Partnerships have proven to be a useful and credible vehicle for effecting change by catalysing Government action, engaging a wide range of stakeholders and creating new, innovative models for the implementation of sustainable development goals and commitments. As a dynamic implementation mechanism that has enriched the work of the Commission, they have become an important resource for relevant stakeholders, promoting their involvement in the work of the Commission. Their significant contribution is widely appreciated by participants.

68. As of July 2008, a total of 344 partnerships had voluntarily registered with the secretariat of the Commission, out of which 102 partnerships identified agriculture, drought, desertification, land, rural development and Africa as the primary focus of their activities. The thematic areas being addressed by registered partnerships cover a wide spectrum. More than half (53 per cent) of all registered partnerships are working in the broad area of protection and management of natural resources. More than one fifth of all registered partnerships are working in the areas of agriculture (28 per cent), biodiversity (27 per cent), climate change (28 per cent), energy (28 per cent), human settlements (22 per cent), rural development (23 per cent) and water (40 per cent).

69. In order to support the work of partnerships, the Commission's Partnerships for Sustainable Development website[13] and database[14] have been constantly improved and updated since their launch in February 2004. The website is to assist and facilitate the identification of partnerships' activities and their contributions by making available practical information ranging from details on how to register new partnerships with the Commission on Sustainable Development secretariat and information on upcoming partnerships-related meetings to recent publications on registered partnerships and detailed guidelines and programme of activities at the Partnerships Fairs organized by the Commission (see below). The database contains reports on the activities of the Partnerships voluntarily submitted by their focal points, which keep this database up to date and form the basis for summary reports prepared by the secretariat of the Commission.

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[13] See http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships/partnerships.htm.

[14] See http://esa.un.org/dsd/partnerships/public/.

70. At the Commission's sixteenth session, the secretariat organized a Partnerships Fair, as part of the official programme of work, in order to provide an opportunity for registered partnerships, particularly those focusing on agriculture, drought, desertification, land, rural development and Africa, as well as on small island developing States, water and sanitation, in order to showcase progress, network with existing and potential partners, create synergies between partnerships and learn from each other's experiences. The Partnerships Fair gave participants an opportunity to gather information on and discuss the important contribution of these initiatives to support the implementation of intergovernmentally agreed sustainable development goals and objectives. It highlighted on the ground experiences from partnerships practitioners working on issues related to the Commission's current implementation cycle (sixteenth and seventeenth sessions) as well as maximized opportunities to identify innovative solutions, effective strategies and emerging possibilities in implementing sustainable development goals and commitments.

71. The Partnerships Fair featured 5 interactive discussion sessions on "Partnerships in Practice", 15 presentations by registered partnerships, 2 training sessions and 18 information desks set up by individual partnerships. The report of the Secretary-General on partnerships for sustainable development (E/CN.17/2008/10) and a background paper with summaries of partnerships registered within the Commission's current implementation cycle were published for the session and served as valuable resources for discussion. Comprehensive and up-to-date information on trends in implementing sustainable development through partnerships was made available through *Partnerships Wire*, a newsletter highlighting discussions during the Fair, which was distributed through the Partnerships for Sustainable Development website.

72. There is increasing recognition that the international community may be entering a new phase of dialogue that requires further efforts to advance and mainstream the partnership-based approach to development. There is also a growing interest in building on the concrete added value that voluntary, multi-stakeholder partnership initiatives bring to the process and in increasing efforts to further scale up and replicate partnership contributions and best practices.

73. Increasingly, a growing number of partnership stakeholders are expressing the need for the holding of a third international forum on partnerships for sustainable development, which would provide an opportunity to take stock and address challenges and opportunities relating to the use of partnerships, further facilitate knowledge-sharing on experiences, lessons learned and best practices and discuss emerging possibilities.

74. Lessons learned from the use of partnerships as a sustainable development implementation mechanism include: increased recognition of the contribution of local actors where partnership's effectiveness, impact and contribution are tested on the ground; increased effectiveness in development cooperation frameworks and enhancement of national sustainable development efforts as a number of Government partners have utilized partnerships as an innovative approach to increasing effectiveness in their development cooperation frameworks; and support for corporate social responsibility efforts since partnerships have proven to be a useful tool for the promotion and facilitation of corporate social responsibility efforts by private sector partners, which account for 38 per cent of the partners involved in those initiatives. Governments must continue to play an important role

in fostering partnerships as the complexity of the development challenges currently facing countries will continue to test the ability of Governments to muster the necessary resources and capacities to confront them.

VIII. Conclusions and recommendations

75. **Implementation of sustainable development principles, goals and policies is continuing at all levels, but the current food crisis, challenges in energy sector and climate change have demonstrated that taking an integrated and holistic approach, with an emphasis on interlinkages, ensuring broad participation in implementation, in particular by the stakeholders, and developing a practical focus on specific measures is essential in order to expedite implementation of sustainable development goals. Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and major groups, including industry and business, should stay on this track while aiming for accelerated progress.**

76. **To that end, it is recommended that the General Assembly:**

(a) **Call on Governments, organizations of the United Nations system and major groups to deepen their commitments to sustainable development by redoubling their efforts to implement Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, in particular by expediting progress in implementation by exchanging lessons learned and best practices;**

(b) **Call on Governments to continue providing their support to the Commission on Sustainable Development and to organize intersessional activities, taking into account the thematic cluster of issues considered by the Commission in 2008/2009 and to emphasize the importance of a consensus outcome and action-oriented policy sessions;**

(c) **Call on Governments to continue providing their support to the Commission on Sustainable Development and, in this regard, to contribute to the Commission's trust fund in support of enhanced participation of representatives of developing countries and representatives of major groups in the work of the Commission;**

(d) **Invite the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination to continue monitoring, through its High-level Committee on Programmes, the operational efficiency and effectiveness of inter-agency collaborative mechanisms, including UN-Energy, UN-Water, UN-Oceans and other collaborative arrangements, in the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development;**

(e) **Call upon donor Governments and international financial institutions to target funding support to developing countries in support of their efforts to overcome barriers and constraints identified during the review year in the thematic cluster of issues of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa.**

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Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The General Assembly, in its resolution 62/95, requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-third session a comprehensive and updated report on the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel, and on the implementation of the resolution. The present report provides updates on the safety and security of humanitarian and United Nations personnel over the past year and on the efforts of the Department of Safety and Security to implement the recommendations of the Assembly contained in resolution 62/95 that fall under the responsibility of the Department.

The report highlights significant challenges and threats to the security and safety of humanitarian and United Nations personnel.[1] It focuses on the Organization's efforts to ensure respect for the human rights, privileges and immunities of humanitarian and United Nations personnel, and to promote a culture of security consciousness, collaboration and accountability at all levels. The report calls for international collective responsibility, according to international laws and principles, and closer collaboration between the United Nations and host Governments to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian and United Nations personnel.

* A/63/150 and Corr.1.

[1] The present report is submitted without prejudice to the implementation of recommendations made by the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of United Nations Personnel and Premises Worldwide or the Independent Panel on Accountability related to the attack on United Nations premises in Algiers in 2007. A further report on institutional issues concerning staff, premises and security will be submitted to the forthcoming General Assembly.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 62/95, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its sixty-third session, a report on the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel, and on the implementation of that resolution. The reporting period is from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008.

II. Security challenges and threats against United Nations and humanitarian personnel

2. The security of humanitarian and United Nations personnel continues to deteriorate. During the reporting period, humanitarian and United Nations personnel were the targets of deliberate attacks by extremists, armed groups and disgruntled sections of populations in all areas of humanitarian and United Nations operations.

3. The attack against United Nations offices in Algiers on 11 December 2007 was stark evidence of this disturbing trend. While threats by extremists existed in the past in a few locations, the threats have expanded indiscriminately to all locations.

4. Primary threats against United Nations and humanitarian personnel remain armed conflict, terrorism, harassment, violent public protests, banditry and criminality in areas of armed conflict, as well as in countries with economic, political and social unrest. Abduction and hostage-taking, whether politically, economically or criminally motivated, remains the most disturbing feature of the humanitarian working environment. In areas where there were no direct attacks or targeting of humanitarian workers, harassment and intimidation has been a serious cause of concern.

5. Key factors contributing to increased challenges for United Nations security management worldwide include (a) expanded and sustained operations, particularly in conflict or post-conflict areas; (b) rising criminality owing to deteriorating public security and limited capacity of local authority in countries facing economic, political and social tension, even without the presence of armed conflict; (c) the spread of terrorist tactics; (d) sharp increases in food and fuel prices leading to violent protests; (e) rising public expectations and local dissatisfaction with United Nations operations or presence; and (f) the climate of impunity for violent acts against United Nations and humanitarian personnel.

6. According to information retrieved from reports of United Nations designated officials for security worldwide (in 156 countries),[2] during the reporting period, the number of deaths of United Nations civilian staff members as a result of malicious acts increased by 36 per cent to a total of 25, compared to 16 deaths in the previous year. Of the 25 deaths, 20 occurred in Africa (including 17 in Algeria, 1 each in Chad, Kenya and Ethiopia), 1 in Asia (Pakistan) and 4 in the Middle East (1 in Lebanon and 3 in the occupied Palestinian territories). Annex I to the present report contains a list of United Nations personnel who lost their lives as a result of malicious acts and indicates the status of legal proceedings undertaken by the host

[2] The most senior United Nations official responsible for the security of all United Nations staff, dependants and property in his or her area of assignment.

Governments. In addition, 10 United Nations staff members died in a helicopter crash in Nepal.

7. Locally recruited humanitarian and United Nations personnel remained the most vulnerable and have accounted for the majority of casualties and arrests, detentions or harassments. For example, out of the total number of 25 deaths, 21 involved locally recruited staff members.

8. In the reporting period, incidents involving the United Nations included 490 attacks,[3] 546 harassment and intimidation cases, 578 robberies, 263 physical assaults, 119 hijackings and 160 arrests by State actors and 39 cases of detention by non-State actors. There were also 84 forced entries and occupations of United Nations offices and 583 residential break-ins.

9. The greatest number of reported security incidents against United Nations personnel[4] occurred mostly in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, according to indicative information provided by United Nations designated officials for security. Annex III to the present report contains further details.

10. The Department of Safety and Security received first-hand and second-hand accounts of security incidents against humanitarian non-governmental organizations (NGOs). During the year, 63 deaths of international and national staff of non-governmental organizations resulting from malicious acts were reported, including 18 in Somalia, 17 in Afghanistan, 14 in the Sudan, 6 in Pakistan, 4 in Chad and 1 each in Burundi, Iraq, Sri Lanka and Uganda. Other incidents against humanitarian NGOs included 236 attacks, 70 cases of detention by State authorities and 103 incidents of unlawful detention by non-State actors, 41 incidents of assault, 132 incidents of harassment, 138 cases of forced entry or occupation of premises, 113 armed robberies, 50 incidents of vehicle hijacking, 70 residential break-ins and 124 cases of theft.

11. It is important to note that the above-mentioned number of incidents against humanitarian NGOs is not an exhaustive account, but rather, reflects the threats and incidents reported by NGOs, many of whom work as implementing partners and contribute to United Nations operations. The escalation of violence directed against relief workers is indicative of the increased threat levels in complex emergencies.

12. Violent acts against United Nations and humanitarian personnel in conflict and post-conflict areas continue unabated. In the Sudan, the 297 incidents against United Nations personnel, include the killing of five World Food Programme contracted drivers, 18 attacks on convoys and premises, 65 arrests by State authorities, 28 assaults and 94 incidents of harassment and intimidation. In Darfur, the number of vehicle hijackings has sharply increased to a monthly average of 12 vehicle hijacking incidents involving United Nations and humanitarian personnel. During the reporting period, the number of vehicle thefts and vehicle hijackings in Darfur included 44 United Nations vehicles, 109 NGO vehicles and 83 vehicles of contractors working for the United Nations.

[3] These included "attacks" on premises, installations and convoys resulting and not resulting in death and/or injuries.

[4] These included attacks, murders, arrests and detentions by State and non-State actors, physical assaults, cases of harassment and intimidation, forced entries or office occupations, missing persons, robberies, hijackings and residential break-ins.

13. In Chad, examples of incidents against the United Nations include the killing of a driver employed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in December 2007 and attacks on two UNHCR convoys in March 2008. A particularly grave incident against humanitarian NGOs took place in May 2008 when armed men attacked a three-car convoy of Save the Children and the United Nations Children's Fund, killing the Country Director of Save the Children.

14. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, persistent attacks by armed groups targeting humanitarian convoys and personnel led to the suspension of humanitarian activities in certain areas in the eastern part of the country. In Haiti, there were 28 vehicle hijackings and seven kidnappings in the reporting period. During the April 2008 protests against high food and fuel prices, a mob invaded and occupied a United Nations office, and angry protestors destroyed five United Nations vehicles.

15. Fighting between armed entities, whether State or non-State actors, continue to affect security of United Nations and humanitarian personnel. In southern Sudan, in April 2008, during fighting, armed groups looted and destroyed offices of the United Nations and international NGOs. In Chad, fighting in N'Djamena prompted United Nations staff to evacuate and caused damage to United Nations premises and equipment in February 2008.

16. In Afghanistan, United Nations and humanitarian organizations continue to face direct targeted attacks. In early 2008, there were indications that a United Nations compound was the target of rocket attacks on two consecutive nights in March, and one in May. During the reporting period, the incidents against humanitarian NGOs, included 8 killings, 51 attacks of convoys and premises, 30 cases of abduction or detention by non-State actors, 21 cases of harassment and intimidation and 22 forced entries to offices.

17. In Somalia, the deteriorating security situation has led to a growing number of incidents in which perpetrators have targeted, killed and abducted humanitarian and United Nations personnel. During the period from April to July 2008, numerous staff of United Nations and humanitarian agencies were abducted, including two contractors of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, one UNHCR national staff member and workers from numerous local and international NGOs, some of which are still detained (as at July 2008). In June 2008, insurgent militia raided the office of United Nations Political Office for Somalia. There were a total of 40 attacks on premises and convoys of humanitarian NGOs and the United Nations, the murders of 2 United Nations staff members and 15 humanitarian workers, the abduction of 6 United Nations staff members and 13 humanitarian workers, and vehicle hijackings, 3 of which involved the United Nations and 20 involving NGOs. The figures continued to rise with a total of 81 incidents against the United Nations in the present reporting period, compared to 54 incidents in 2007.

18. Another disturbing feature of the incidents has been the frequency of collateral damage to premises of the United Nations and NGOs as a result of crossfire. In Iraq, United Nations staff and premises have been hit by attacks on the International Zone, including the 27 March 2008 attack in which one United Nations subcontractor was killed and two injured.

III. Arrest, detention and other restrictions

19. In the reporting period, the number of United Nations personnel arrested, detained or missing, and for whom the United Nations has been unable to exercise its right to protection, has decreased slightly to 19 cases from 22 cases for the past year. As at 30 June 2008, 12 United Nations staff members remained under detention in Israel, 3 in Eritrea and 2 in Somalia; 2 staff members remained missing. Annex II to the present report contains a consolidated list of missing staff members and those under arrest and detention.

IV. Respect for the human rights, privileges and immunities of United Nations and other personnel: implementation of resolution 62/95

20. The United Nations security management system is based on the principle that the primary responsibility for the security and protection of staff members, their dependants and the Organization's property rests with the host Governments. The Organization continues to take steps to carry out recommendations contained in resolution 62/95, in which the General Assembly asked the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures to ensure full respect for the human rights, privileges and immunities of United Nations and other personnel carrying out activities in fulfilling the mandate of a United Nations operation, and to seek the inclusion, in negotiations of future and existing headquarters and mission agreements, of key provisions of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies and the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel.

21. The United Nations Department of Safety and Security has pursued a joint strategy with the Office of Legal Affairs and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to promote the compliance by Member States with the conventions on privileges and immunities. The Department, in consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs, continued to bring specific cases of infringement of the human rights and privileges and immunities of United Nations personnel, or other persons undertaking activities in fulfilling the mandate of a United Nations operation, to the attention of the host Governments.

22. At its meeting in Washington, D.C. in February 2008, the United Nations Inter-agency Security Management Network[5] discussed the need to put in place supplementary agreements either between the United Nations system organizations and host countries, or on a system-wide basis at the duty station, outlining the host country's specific responsibilities for the protection of United Nations personnel and premises. The intention is to supplement, but not replace, the applicable host country agreements. The designated official, in consultation with the host Government, would adjust the model supplementary agreement to address country-specific needs. The Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security continued to

[5] United Nations security management mechanism, comprising agencies, funds and programmes and departments, which discusses and considers security policies and issues of the United Nations security management system.

intensify his contacts and dialogue with Member States, through their permanent missions to the United Nations, and direct contacts with various host country authorities, to increase cooperation with the host Governments.

23. Certain Governments continue to impede the import, deployment and use of essential communications and security equipment required for United Nations operations, in contravention of the above-mentioned international legal instruments. These restrictions have a serious adverse effect on staff security and on the beneficiaries of United Nations programmes.

V. Promoting and enhancing security consciousness

24. The Department of Safety and Security continued to take steps to enhance security consciousness, accountability and awareness of security procedures and policies. Those steps include (a) comprehensive staff training; (b) critical incident stress management; (c) security information management; (d) threat and risk analyses and crisis management; and (e) security mainstreaming.

A. Security training programmes and awareness campaign initiatives

25. The Department's Training and Development Section continued to make progress in conducting security training programmes, including a new mandatory two-day induction training for newly appointed designated officials, security management team training, a security certification programme for new field security coordination officers and a refresher training programme for serving Department security personnel.

26. During the reporting period, the Department conducted (a) nine new designated official induction training sessions; (b) 27 security management team training sessions; (c) two security certification programmes for 66 security officers; and (d) five refresher training programmes for 91 security officers. The Department is developing an intermediate training programme for newly promoted security advisers to meet its staff development strategy. Moreover, the Department conducted the following specialized training programmes: (a) hostage incident management training for 26 security officers of United Nations system organizations; (b) numerous safe and secure approaches to field environments training-of-trainer workshops for United Nations staff in six high-risk countries; (c) two safe and secure approaches to field environments training-of-trainer workshops, conducted in coordination with the United Nations System Staff College, for 43 selected security officers; (d) emergency trauma bag and basic first aid training for 400 staff members; (e) five field security training programmes for 136 peacekeeping mission security officers; and (f) one security and safety service training-of-trainers workshop for 24 participants.

27. To promote system-wide security awareness, the Department is revising the online CD-ROM training programme entitled, "Basic security in the field", initially launched in 2003. The new version includes updated information on the United Nations security management structure, living and working in a new cultural environment, influenza pandemic preparedness and vehicle safety. For the past year, about 10,691 United Nations staff members completed the Advanced Security in the

Field security learning programme by using the Department of Safety and Security website or the CD-ROM.

28. In view of the number of deaths and serious injuries of United Nations staff members due to vehicle accidents, the Department has launched a global "Road safety campaign 2008".

B. Critical incident stress management

29. Critical incident stress management remains a central component of the Organization's security response. For the past year, the Critical Incident Stress Management Unit of the Department of Safety and Security has been proactively providing services to staff members and developing systems to enhance emergency responses. The Unit has strengthened collaboration with key United Nations stakeholders and initiated sustainable systems to increase the availability and quality of critical incident stress management services.

30. During the reporting period, the Department has focused on responses to key emergencies, including the attack against United Nations offices in Algeria, the political unrest in Nairobi, the devastation caused by hurricane Felix in Nicaragua, the helicopter crash in Nepal, the turmoil in Chad and United Nations staff evacuation, and the devastating impact of cyclone Nargis in Myanmar, as well as traumatic events in other countries. The Department's counsellors assisted 2,676 United Nations staff members during the period.

31. To enhance crisis response preparedness, the Department continued to build United Nations regional capacity in critical incident stress management. Positive steps include counsellor certification training with a view to establishing United Nations counselling networks in different regions. Some 28 counsellors from 17 countries received intensive critical incident stress-management training during the past year and the Department has facilitated training and workshops for 4,073 staff members. In addition, the Department continued to build United Nations critical incident stress-management capacity at the country level. The appointment of national counsellors in 14 countries has proved cost-effective in responding to the tragic events in Nepal, Myanmar, Pakistan and Chad; Department counsellors provided technical support to 11 peacekeeping mission senior counsellors providing services to 11,518 staff members.

C. Electronic information strategy

32. Over the past year, the Department's website (dss.un.org) had an increased number of registered users, from 38,000 to 68,000 staff members, and served as secure access to security-related information, such as travel advisories, the Department's staff directory, security awareness and training materials, and stress management and mission readiness information. In the reporting period, the Department processed 22,800 security clearance requests monthly for operations worldwide through the integrated security clearance and tracking system.

D. Threat and risk assessment and crisis management

33. The Department of Safety and Security continued to provide management, support and assistance to designated officials and United Nations country teams on security risk management. To increase the knowledge of designated officials, members of security management teams and United Nations security professionals, the Department has included security risk management as an integral part of security guidelines and main security training programmes for security officers and key actors in the United Nations security management system at the country level. The Department continued to take steps to ensure timely response to all security-related threats and emergencies. To improve capacity in responding to emergencies, the Department has strengthened its 24/7 Crisis Management Centre with established procedures and staff training. During the reporting period, the Centre supported responses to crises in Chad (twice), Lebanon, Somalia, and Kenya.

34. As part of efforts to mitigate threats against United Nations premises located at offices away from headquarters, regional commissions and tribunals, the Department of Safety and Security has carried out standardized access control in these locations. Based on comprehensive threat and risk assessment, the Department provided close protection to 73 senior officials travelling to 143 different countries during the reporting period.

E. Mainstreaming of security management

35. The Department of Safety and Security continued to take steps to mainstream security management at all levels of United Nations activities with the strategic aim of enabling United Nations operations. The Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security continued to hold regular and close consultations with various departments within the United Nations Secretariat, agencies, funds and programmes to promote security management as an integral and enabling part of policy, planning, operational and administrative consideration for United Nations programmes and activities.

36. In promoting an organizational culture of accountability for staff security, the Department continued to work closely with United Nations system organizations and Secretariat departments, to increase awareness of management responsibility for all actors in the United Nations security management system. The inclusion of designated official's responsibilities as a core function of senior officials, such as resident coordinators, special representatives of the Secretary-General and heads of missions, marked a positive development. The Department continues to take measures to integrate safety and security components within the Department, including integrated training and standardized safety and security policies and procedures.

VI. Conformity with operating standards

37. In line with General Assembly resolution 62/95, the United Nations continues to take steps to ensure that United Nations staff members are properly informed about and operate in conformity with the minimum operating security standards.

38. The Department's Policy, Planning and Coordination Unit, which ensures a unified capacity for security policy developments and coordination, has worked closely with other units and departments as well as United Nations system organizations to ensure that security policies, operational procedures and standards are cohesive and consistent, incorporated into staff training, applicable to the field and reflective of emerging security challenges. With a view to developing common security policies for a unified United Nations security management system, the Unit has undertaken ongoing efforts in revising the *United Nations Field Security Handbook*, the *United Nations Security Operations Manual* and security technical standards.

39. The revised Guidelines for designated officials, developed and circulated by the Department in April 2008, was a positive development in promoting designated officials' security management responsibilities and accountability at the field level, particularly with regard to his or her leadership in security management coordination, security risk management, contingency planning, crisis management and cooperation with host Governments.

40. The Department continued to provide substantive and secretariat support to the Inter-Agency Security Management Network to promote increased cooperation and collaboration among all United Nations departments, organizations, funds and programmes and affiliated international organizations in planning and carrying out measures to improve staff security, training and awareness.

41. As a measure to promote compliance with existing security standards, the Department's Compliance, Evaluation and Monitoring Unit conducted 10 compliance field visits to increase conformity with all United Nations security policies, including minimum operating security standards. While compliance levels varied among those evaluated, on a scale of 1 to 5, the average compliance rate was 3.59, compared to 3.20 in the previous year. The average minimum operating security standards compliance increased to 83 per cent, compared to 82 per cent in the previous year. The Unit proposed a total of 349 recommendations for improving compliance with security policies in various offices.

42. To assist the United Nations country teams in carrying out standardized and systematic evaluation, the Department continued to establish procedures for assessing the compliance with security standards. It initiated the minimum operating security standards self-assessment programme and continued to develop the compliance information management system to ensure a standardized approach, transparency and easy access to compliance information.

VII. Collaboration and cooperation on security measures

A. Security collaboration between the United Nations and host Governments

43. In fulfilling the mandates reflected in General Assembly resolution 62/95, in which the General Assembly invited the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to work closely with host Governments to strengthen the analysis of threats, the United Nations has taken measures to enhance security collaboration with host Governments, including efforts to support United Nations designated

officials with regard to collaboration with host Government authorities, particularly by establishing country-level mechanisms for information exchange, and risk assessment and situation analysis. The Department has included collaboration with host Government authorities as a core function of designated officials and continued to support designated officials through field visits and participation in bilateral, multilateral, and regional dialogues and through increased interaction with the permanent missions.

44. The Department continues to promote best practices for further cooperation with host Governments, through developing guidelines, policies and integrated training and awareness programmes for staff in the field to increase cooperation with host Government authorities, particularly in the areas of (a) establishment of coordination and information-exchange mechanisms; (b) security risk assessment; (c) the security of locally recruited personnel; (d) joint contingency or emergency planning and exercises; (e) awareness and sensitivity to local cultures and laws; and (f) joint efforts to promote the local population's awareness of the United Nations role and mandates.

B. Security collaboration between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations

45. In line with the guidance provided by the General Assembly, the United Nations continues to work closely with NGOs and intergovernmental organizations to improve coordination on security management, particularly in challenging conflict and post-conflict areas. The mechanism for collaboration is the "Saving Lives Together" framework, endorsed by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, for the United Nations-intergovernmental organizations-NGO security collaboration. During the reporting period, the Department of Safety and Security, albeit with limited extrabudgetary support, was able to implement and collect, analyse and disseminate lessons learned on Saving Lives Together initiatives in over two dozen countries around the world.

46. The primary focus of the Department's NGO liaison activities in the field during the period under review was on Darfur in the Sudan, in carrying out security collaboration projects with NGOs working alongside the United Nations in that complex environment. Efforts are under way to integrate further security coordination mechanisms between the United Nations and NGOs in the specific contexts of Somalia, Sri Lanka, Colombia and Haiti. The Department has cultivated a close working relationship with the NGO consortia recognized by the General Assembly, including the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, InterAction and the Steering Committee on Humanitarian Response, which contributed to the preparation of the portion of the present report on the situation related to NGOs, and to efforts to enhance further security collaboration. During the last year, the Department undertook numerous visits to the NGO consortia headquarters to increase awareness on the Saving Lives Together framework and deployed an officer to maintain liaison with NGOs in Kenya during the crisis in January and February 2008. This demonstrated the value of such collaboration by forming an effective link between the United Nations and other crisis responders.

C. Security arrangements for integrated missions

47. The Department continues to intensify efforts to enhance security integration in peace missions worldwide. Currently, there are 11 United Nations integrated peace missions directed by the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and supported by the Department of Field Support. Integrated missions comprise a peacekeeping or peacebuilding operation and a United Nations country team under a single head of mission who normally serves as the designated official for security. To achieve further security coordination, the Department has established a security cell, comprising the mission security personnel and security staff of United Nations system organizations.

VIII. Observations and recommendations

48. **I am gravely concerned by the wide scale of threats, the rise in deliberate targeting of humanitarian and United Nations personnel, and their vulnerability worldwide. In this disturbing trend, hostage incidents and targeted attacks against humanitarian and United Nations staff in areas of humanitarian emergencies continue unabated. Locally recruited personnel of the United Nations and humanitarian organizations are most vulnerable in conflict and post-conflict areas.**

49. **I remain deeply distressed and saddened by the loss of 17 United Nations staff members in the 11 December 2007 attack in Algiers. I condemn in the strongest terms those attacks, and remain thankful to the General Assembly and the Security Council for their condemnations of them. This tragic event is another telling reminder, not only of the changing nature and scale of threats, but also of the urgent need for closer cooperation between the United Nations and the host Governments on security matters. In the wake of the tragedy, I issued instructions for an immediate review of all United Nations policies and measures to ensure security and safety of our staff and premises worldwide. The present report is without prejudice to the implementation of recommendations made by the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of United Nations Personnel and Premises Worldwide or the Independent Panel on Accountability related to the attack on United Nations premises in Algiers in 2007. A further report on institutional issues concerning staff, premises and security will be submitted to the General Assembly at its forthcoming session.**

50. **As part of this ongoing review, I will continue to encourage the Organization's efforts in drawing from lessons learned and taking timely steps to strengthen the United Nations security management system by improving accountability, leadership and internal management. In line with the recommendations of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of United Nations Personnel and Premises Worldwide,[6] priorities include addressing key policy, operational and strategic weakness, improving the safety and security of locally recruited staff, providing adequate resources, improving the framework**

[6] The report, entitled, *Towards a Culture of Security and Accountability*, was issued 9 June 2008 (www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/terrorism/PanelOnSafetyReport.pdf).

for accountability,[7] enhancing cooperation with host Governments and Member States, and restoring public trust in the United Nations at the global and local levels.

51. **On issues under its responsibility, the Department of Safety and Security will maintain its focus on enabling effective United Nations programme delivery through achieving the following priority objectives: (a) effective and timely responses to, and preventive action for, all security-related threats and other emergencies; (b) effective risk mitigation through well-coordinated security threat and risk assessment mechanisms; and (c) high-quality security policies, standards and operational guidelines and procedures and compliance.**

52. **The Department of Safety and Security will continue to amplify its efforts on (a) enhancing collaboration and dialogue between the United Nations and Member States on staff security and promoting best practices; and (b) establishing effective mechanisms, at the country level, between United Nations designated officials and the host country authorities for information exchange, risk analysis and decisions related to security issues. As part of the efforts to promote closer cooperation with Member States and host Governments, I will continue to include staff security issues in my regular conversations with senior officials of Member States.**

53. **All these efforts are possible only with the proactive participation and support of all Member States and host Governments. Equally important is the need for Member States to include the security of humanitarian and United Nations personnel as an integral part of their considerations and deliberations in United Nations intergovernmental bodies. Decisions and actions by United Nations intergovernmental bodies on the scope and mandate of United Nations operations have significant influence on public trust in, and attitude towards, the Organization with a direct impact on the security of United Nations staff, as pointed out by the Independent Panel. The international community's continued commitment to ensure that security management is an integral element of United Nations and humanitarian operations remains crucial for fulfilling humanitarian mandates.**

54. **As the primary responsibility for the protection of United Nations staff rests with the host Governments, current security challenges call for global collective responsibility and steps to promote compliance with internationally agreed principles. While most Governments remain committed to carrying out recommendations on responsibilities and roles of host Government as contained in General Assembly resolution 62/95, I call upon all Member States to address three topical issues, namely: (a) unlawful arrests, detention and harassment of United Nations staff; (b) obstruction of freedom of movement of United Nations and humanitarian workers; and (c) impunity for crimes committed against humanitarian and United Nations personnel. Moreover, as public attitudes and sentiments have a direct effect on the safety and security of humanitarian and United Nations personnel, I call upon host Government authorities to refrain from public statements that could jeopardize the safety and security of humanitarian workers.**

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[7] See Inter-organizational security measures: framework for accountability for the United Nations security management system, which outlines security responsibilities of all actors within the system (A/61/531, annex I).

55. **The reputation of the United Nations for impartiality promotes public trust and a positive attitude towards the Organization which contributes to the protection of United Nations personnel and humanitarian partners. I remain fully committed to ensuring that United Nations staff members strictly observe high standards of conduct and carry out their mandates with moral authority, as well as respect for those they are helping.**

56. **I continue to be gravely concerned by the difficulties we encounter in a few countries over the import of communication equipment. I appeal to all Member States that have imposed such restrictions to lift them immediately.**

57. **Locally recruited United Nations staff members continue to face increased security threats and have become victims of targeted abuse, harassment and unlawful detention in areas where their services are most critical for sustaining United Nations activities. The Organization and the international community urgently need to review the policies and arrangements necessary to provide locally recruited personnel with adequate safety and security.**

58. **I wish to commend the host Governments and their relevant national and local officials who continue to observe the internationally agreed principles on the protection of humanitarian and United Nations personnel. Beyond the legal obligations, I urge all Member States to forge a common and forceful political will in taking steps, at the national and international levels, to ensure the safety and security of United Nations and humanitarian personnel through their individual and collective joint actions with the United Nations. I cannot overemphasize the importance of security collaboration between the United Nations and the host country on contingency planning, information exchange, risk assessment and combating impunity as a strategic priority of the United Nations security management system.**

59. **While the Organization and the humanitarian community will continue to intensify efforts in reforming and bettering its security management, support by host Governments and local authorities and leaders remains the first line of defence in the protection of humanitarian and United Nations personnel.**

60. **I am deeply disturbed by the trend of politically or criminally motivated targeting of humanitarians, which is most evident in Somalia, where, during the reporting period, 18 NGO staff members were murdered. Although investigations are difficult in this context, evidence and statements by insurgent groups suggest that the majority of them were victims of targeted assassination. I condemn such behaviour in the strongest terms and call upon all parties to respect humanitarian principles and to allow the safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance.**

61. **I wish to express my deepest condolences to the families of all humanitarian and United Nations staff who lost their lives in the line of duty. I highly commend the humanitarian and United Nations staff, who are working in increasingly dangerous and challenging conditions to fulfil their mandates, for their sacrifice and courage.**

62. **On behalf of all United Nations staff members, I wish to express our deep appreciation to the Member States for their significant support to the continued development of the Department of Safety and Security. Effective provision of**

services by the Department continues to require partnership and investment by all stakeholders.

63. **I wish to recommend that the General Assembly remain seized of this critical issue and continue its robust support of the United Nations Security Management System.**

Annex I

Civilian personnel who lost their lives as a result of malicious acts during the reporting period (1 July 2007-30 June 2008)

No.	*Name*	*Nationality/organization*	*Place and date of incident*	*Cause*	*Legal action*
1	Mustapha Benbara	Algeria/UNFPA	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
2	Karim Bentebal	Algeria/UNHCR	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
3	Saadia Boucelham	Algeria/UNDP	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
4	Hind Boukroufa	Algeria/UNDP	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
5	Samia Hammoutene	Algeria/UNDP	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
6	Chadli Hamza	Algeria/UNDP	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
7	Abderrahim Hanniche	Algeria/ILO	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
8	Mohamed Khelladi	Algeria/UNDP	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
9	Mohamed Laseli	Algeria/UNIDO	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
10	Gene Nunez Luna Maria	Philippines/WFP	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
11	Babacar Ndiaye	Senegal/DSS	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
12	Steven Olejas	Denmark/UNDP	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
13	Djamal Rezzoug	Algeria/UNDP	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
14	Kamel Sait	Algeria/UNFPA	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
15	Hakim Si Larbi	Algeria/UNAIDS	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
16	Nabil Slimani	Algeria/UNHCR	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
17	Adnane Souilah	Algeria/UNFPA	Algiers, 11 December 2007	Algiers bombing	Police investigation ongoing
18	Mahamat Mamadou	Chad/UNHCR	Chad, 6 December 2007	Gunshot	Police investigation ongoing
19	Kifle Woldu Tsega	Ethiopia/WHO	Hardin, Ethiopia, 3 July 2007	Gunshot	Police investigation ongoing
20	Wafa' Al Daghmah	Palestine/UNRWA	Gaza, 7 May 2008	Gunshot	Not reported

No.	*Name*	*Nationality/organization*	*Place and date of incident*	*Cause*	*Legal action*
21	Iman Hamdan	Palestine/UNRWA	Gaza, 6 January 2008	Gunshot	Not reported
22	Nasser Masara	Palestine/UNRWA	Gaza, 13 December 2007	Air strike	Not reported
23	Silence Chirara	Zimbabwe/WFP	Lokichiggio, Kenya, 7 May 2008	Gunshot	Police investigation ongoing
24	Jihad Mahmoud El Saleh	Lebanon/UNRWA	Lebanon, 23 January 2007	Gunshot	Not reported
25	Muzaffar Khan	Pakistan/WHO	Peshawar, Pakistan, 13 October 2007	Gunshot	Police investigation completed

Note: ILO — International Labour Organization
UNAIDS — Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
DSS — Department of Safety and Security of the United Nations Secretariat
UNFPA — United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR — Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIDO — United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNRWA — United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WFP — World Food Programme
WHO — World Health Organization

Annex II

Consolidated list of civilian staff members under arrest, detained or missing with respect to whom the United Nations, the specialized agencies and related organizations have been unable to exercise fully their right to protection during the reporting period (1 July 2007-30 June 2008)

No.	*Name*	*Organization*	*Place and date of incident*
1	Mohammed Sheik Abdi	FAO	Arrested in Afgoye Corridor, Somalia, 30 June 2008
2	Yonas Wolderufael	OCHA	Arrested in Afabet, Eritrea, 3 September 2007
3	Hassan Mohamed Ali "Keynan"	UNHCR	Arrested in Eelasha Neighbourhood, Somalia, 21 June 2008
4	Abner Tsehaye	UNMEE	Arrested in Asmara, 26 September 2008
5	Dereje Hailmariam	UNMEE	Arrested in Assab, Eritrea, 28 April 2008
6	Issa Abu Rouk	UNRWA	Arrested in Khuza'a Area, Gaza, 23 August 2007
7	Mohammed Qasem Obeid	UNRWA	Arrested in Jenin Camp, West Bank, 15 January 2007
8	Shareef Qasem Nassar Nassar	UNRWA	Arrested in Madama Village, West Bank, 6 March 2007
9	Ibrahim Fayyad Sheikh Yusef	UNRWA	Arrested in West Bank, 31 July 2005
10	Ibrahim Ayoub Mohd. Abu Leil	UNRWA	Arrested in Sadra West Bank, 16 May 2004
11	Nidal Dauod	UNRWA	Arrested in Qalandia West Bank, 25 September 2002
12	Nahed Rashid Attallah	UNRWA	Arrested in Gaza, 14 August 2002
13	Mahmoud Abdul Rahman Khatatbeh	UNRWA	Arrested in Beit Forik, West Bank, 31 August 2007
14	Ziyad Fararjeh	UNRWA	Arrested in Dheisheh, West Bank, 10 October 2007
15	Ali Mohd Qura'ny	UNRWA	Arrested in Balata camp, West Bank, 18 January 2008
16	Rasem Sarhan	UNRWA	Arrested in Fara'a camp, West Bank, 13 February 2008
17	Hussein Masharqeh	UNRWA	Arrested in Dura, West Bank, 4 September 2007

No.	*Name*	*Organization*	*Place and date of incident*
18	Arob Arob	UNMIS	Missing in Abyei, the Sudan, 14 May 2008
19	Aeyrn Gillern	UNIDO	Missing in Vienna, 29 October 2007

Note: FAO — Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
OCHA — Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat
UNHCR — Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIDO — United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNMEE — United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea
UNMIS — United Nations Mission in the Sudan
UNRWA — United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Annex III

Number of security incidents involving United Nations staff members from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008

	Country or area	Total	Attack	Murder	Arrest and detention by state	Detention by non-state actors	Assault	Harassment and intimidation	Forced entry and/or office occupation	Missing staff member	Robbery	Hijacking	Residential break-in	Theft
1	Albania	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
2	Armenia	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
3	Austria	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
4	Azerbaijan	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
5	Belarus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Belgium	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
7	Bosnia and Herzegovina	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	4
8	Bulgaria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Croatia	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	Cyprus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Czech Republic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	Denmark	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
13	Estonia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
14	Finland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	France	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4
16	Georgia	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
17	Germany	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	0	1	0
18	Greece	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
19	Hungary	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	1
20	Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
21	Italy	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
22	Latvia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
23	Lithuania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24	Macedonia (the former Yugoslav Republic of)	8	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	5

	Country or area	Total	Attack	Murder	Arrest and detention by state	Detention by non-state actors	Assault	Harassment and intimidation	Forced entry and/or office occupation	Missing staff member	Robbery	Hijacking	Residential break-in	Theft
25	Malta	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
26	Moldova	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
27	Monaco	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
28	Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
29	Netherlands	17	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	4	0	1	8
30	Norway	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
31	Poland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
32	Portugal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
33	Romania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
34	Russian Federation	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
35	Serbia*	62	0	1	1	0	6	2	3	1	3	0	29	16
36	Slovakia	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
37	Spain	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
38	Sweden	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
39	Switzerland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
40	Ukraine	8	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	5
41	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Europe Total	**143**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**11**	**10**	**7**	**3**	**17**	**0**	**39**	**54**
1	Argentina	19	0	0	0	0	1	7	2	0	6	0	1	2
2	Barbados	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	Belize	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	3
4	Bolivia	5	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Brazil	26	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	10	0	2	10
6	Canada	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
7	Chile	14	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	2	0	6	1
8	Colombia	34	0	0	1	0	0	7	1	0	10	0	10	5
9	Costa Rica	15	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	4	0	1	1

	Country or area	Total	Attack	Murder	Arrest and detention by state	Detention by non-state actors	Assault	Harassment and intimidation	Forced entry and/or office occupation	Missing staff member	Robbery	Hijacking	Residential break-in	Theft
10	Cuba	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	4
11	Dominican Republic	11	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	4	0	0	4
12	Ecuador	27	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	10	0	2	11
13	El Salvador	18	0	0	0	0	5	4	0	0	5	0	4	0
14	Guatemala	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	5	0	8
15	Guyana	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
16	Haiti	147	2	0	13	0	58	21	4	0	13	28	6	2
17	Honduras	11	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	4	0	2	2
18	Jamaica	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	4
19	Mexico	23	0	0	1	0	9	7	0	0	0	0	6	0
20	Nicaragua	15	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	5	1	3	1
21	Panama	9	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	5
22	Paraguay	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	1	0
23	Peru	41	0	1	0	0	0	8	0	0	10	0	7	15
24	Suriname	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
25	Trinidad and Tobago	25	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	6	1	2	11
26	Uruguay	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	6	0
27	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
	Americas Total	**510**	**4**	**2**	**15**	**2**	**94**	**69**	**17**	**0**	**114**	**35**	**66**	**92**
1	Bahrain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	Egypt	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	6
3	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
4	Iraq	25	3	1	0	2	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	3
5	Israel and occupied Palestinian territories	145	48	6	5	11	5	32	14	0	2	1	6	15
6	Jordan	36	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	10	0	0	24
7	Kuwait	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
8	Lebanon	61	6	2	12	2	9	14	8	0	1	0	4	3
9	Oman	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

	Country or area	Total	Attack	Murder	Arrest and detention by state	Detention by non-state actors	Assault	Harassment and intimidation	Forced entry and/or office occupation	Missing staff member	Robbery	Hijacking	Residential break-in	Theft
10	Qatar	**0**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Saudi Arabia	**3**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
12	Syrian Arab Republic	**19**	0	0	0	0	2	7	0	0	1	0	2	7
13	Turkey	**2**	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
14	United Arab Emirates	**0**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	Yemen	**6**	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	0
	Middle East Total	**312**	**59**	**9**	**17**	**15**	**18**	**74**	**22**	**0**	**18**	**3**	**15**	**62**
1	Angola	**40**	0	0	2	0	0	1	4	0	21	0	4	8
2	Botswana	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3	Comoros	**3**	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
4	Djibouti	**0**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Eritrea	**3**	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Ethiopia	**35**	0	1	2	0	1	18	0	0	5	0	1	7
7	Kenya	**66**	0	1	2	0	2	7	1	0	21	0	13	19
8	Lesotho	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
9	Madagascar	**63**	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	4	0	25	25
10	Malawi	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
11	Mauritius	**0**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	Mozambique	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
13	Namibia	**14**	0	0	0	0	1	0	6	0	2	0	5	0
14	Seychelles	**1**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
15	Somalia	**81**	20	2	5	6	0	35	1	0	1	3	2	6
16	South Africa	**64**	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	27	4	16	15
17	Sudan (UNMIS)	**212**	10	5	65	0	23	87	1	1	14	0	1	5
18	Sudan (UNAMID)	**85**	8	1	0	5	5	7	3	0	8	44	2	2
19	Swaziland	**7**	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	2	1
20	Uganda	**28**	5	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	3	0	8	8
21	United Republic of Tanzania	**35**	1	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	8	1	3	18

	Country or area	Total	Attack	Murder	Arrest and detention by state	Detention by non-state actors	Assault	Harassment and intimidation	Forced entry and/or office occupation	Missing staff member	Robbery	Hijacking	Residential break-in	Theft
22	Zambia	31	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	22
23	Zimbabwe	50	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	10	0	17	19
	East Africa Total	**818**	**44**	**10**	**84**	**12**	**37**	**167**	**20**	**1**	**129**	**54**	**104**	**156**
1	Algeria	21	1	17	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
2	Benin	54	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	9	1	8	33
3	Burkina Faso	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
4	Burundi	51	3	0	0	0	4	30	0	0	6	0	2	6
5	Cameroon	35	13	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	11	3	2	5
6	Cape Verde	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Central African Republic	8	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
8	Chad	36	6	1	1	0	1	3	0	0	2	5	17	0
9	Congo	14	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	5	2
10	Côte d'Ivoire	28	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	13	2	4	5
11	Democratic Republic of the Congo	383	0	1	0	0	17	37	3	0	95	0	139	91
12	Equatorial Guinea	6	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	2	0
13	Gabon	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
14	Gambia	12	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	6
15	Ghana	30	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	7	1	13	7
16	Guinea	29	0	0	1	0	3	0	2	0	0	1	6	16
17	Guinea-Bissau	13	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	4	0	6	0
18	Liberia	413	5	0	0	2	25	37	0	1	56	0	45	242
19	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	6	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	0
20	Mali	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2
21	Mauritania	6	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	0
22	Morocco	4	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
23	Niger	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
24	Nigeria	47	2	0	1	0	2	1	2	0	22	6	1	10
25	Rwanda	20	0	0	3	0	0	2	1	0	4	0	1	9

	Country or area	Total	Attack	Murder	Arrest and detention by state	Detention by non-state actors	Assault	Harassment and intimidation	Forced entry and/or office occupation	Missing staff member	Robbery	Hijacking	Residential break-in	Theft
26	Sao Tome and Principe	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
27	Senegal	17	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	6	0	5	5
28	Sierra Leone	29	5	0	0	0	2	8	0	0	4	0	6	4
29	Togo	9	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	1	2	1
30	Tunisia	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
31	Western Sahara	11	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	1	5
	West Africa Total	**1 305**	**37**	**19**	**16**	**2**	**71**	**129**	**12**	**1**	**252**	**22**	**287**	**457**
1	Afghanistan	31	12	0	1	2	1	10	0	0	2	0	3	0
2	Australia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3	Bangladesh	14	0	0	1	0	0	6	0	0	2	0	0	5
4	Bhutan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Brunei Darussalam	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6	Cambodia	34	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	12	0	9	11
7	China	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Fiji	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
10	India	13	0	0	1	0	0	6	1	0	1	0	0	4
11	Indonesia	23	1	0	1	1	3	9	0	0	0	0	5	3
12	Japan	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
13	Kazakhstan	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	7
14	Kyrgyzstan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	Lao People's Democratic Republic	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
16	Malaysia	12	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	2	0	0	5
17	Maldives	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
18	Mongolia	7	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
19	Myanmar	12	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	3	3
20	Nepal	18	6	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	2	0	4	0
21	Pakistan	33	4	1	1	2	1	7	1	0	5	5	3	3

	Country or area		Total	Attack	Murder	Arrest and detention by state	Detention by non-state actors	Assault	Harassment and intimidation	Forced entry and/or office occupation	Missing staff member	Robbery	Hijacking	Residential break-in	Theft
22	Papua New Guinea		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
23	Philippines		9	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	5
24	Republic of Korea		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	Samoa		8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	1
26	Singapore		0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
27	Sri Lanka		77	2	0	14	3	4	43	1	0	5	0	5	1
28	Tajikistan		3	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
29	Thailand		55	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	7	0	4	42
30	Timor-Leste		404	321	0	2	0	11	4	0	0	3	0	20	43
31	Turkmenistan		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
32	Uzbekistan		5	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0
33	Viet Nam		9	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	4
	Asia and Pacific	**Total**	**783**	**346**	**2**	**27**	**8**	**32**	**97**	**6**	**0**	**48**	**5**	**72**	**140**
	Asia and Pacific	**Total**	**783**	**346**	**2**	**27**	**8**	**32**	**97**	**6**	**0**	**48**	**5**	**72**	**140**
	Middle East	**Total**	**312**	**59**	**9**	**17**	**15**	**18**	**74**	**22**	**0**	**18**	**3**	**15**	**62**
	Europe	**Total**	**143**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**11**	**10**	**7**	**3**	**17**	**0**	**39**	**54**
	Americas	**Total**	**510**	**4**	**2**	**15**	**2**	**94**	**69**	**17**	**0**	**114**	**35**	**66**	**92**
	West Africa	**Total**	**1 305**	**37**	**19**	**16**	**2**	**71**	**129**	**12**	**1**	**252**	**22**	**287**	**457**
	East Africa	**Total**	**818**	**44**	**10**	**84**	**12**	**37**	**167**	**20**	**1**	**129**	**54**	**104**	**156**
			3 871	**490**	**43**	**160**	**39**	**263**	**546**	**84**	**5**	**578**	**119**	**583**	**961**

* Including Kosovo.

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Sixty-third session
Item 65 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Elimination of racism and racial discrimination: elimination of racism and racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

Financial situation of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Report of the Secretary-General

1. Pursuant to article 8, paragraph 6, of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (General Assembly resolution 2106 A (XX), annex), States parties shall be responsible for the expenses of the members of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination while they are in performance of Committee duties.

2. In its resolution 47/111, the General Assembly welcomed the decision taken at the Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention in January 1992 to amend article 8 of the Convention and requested the Secretary-General to take the appropriate measures to provide for the financing of the Committee from the regular budget of the United Nations, beginning with the budget for the biennium 1994-1995, and to take the necessary measures to ensure that the Committee met as scheduled until the amendment entered into force.

3. Acting in his capacity as depositary, the Secretary-General communicated the amendment to all States parties on 1 March 1993 (see annex I). It will be recalled that, at their Fourteenth Meeting, the States parties had decided that the amendment would enter into force when accepted by a two-thirds majority of States parties that had so notified the Secretary-General as depositary. As at 1 June 2008, notifications of acceptance had been received from 43 States parties to the Convention.

4. In section II of its resolution 61/148, the General Assembly strongly urged States parties to the Convention to accelerate their domestic ratification procedures with regard to the amendment to the Convention concerning the financing of the Committee and to notify the Secretary-General expeditiously in writing of their agreement to the amendment; requested the Secretary-General to continue to ensure adequate financial arrangements and to provide the necessary support, including an

* A/63/150.

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adequate level of Secretariat assistance, in order to ensure the functioning of the Committee and to enable it to cope with its increasing amount of work; and also requested him to invite those States parties that were in arrears to pay the amounts in arrears, and to report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-third session.

5. Financing for the annual sessions of the Committee in 2007 and 2008 was provided from the regular budget, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 47/111. Consequently, no State party assessments were made in those two years. However, a number of States parties are still in arrears as a result of the non-payment of previous assessments. As at 30 June 2008, the total arrears outstanding amounted to $141,809.82 (see annex II).

Annex I

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: approval by the General Assembly of the proposed amendment to article 8

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, acting in his capacity as depositary, and with reference to depositary notification C.N.285.1991.TREATIES-4 of 20 December 1991, communicates the following:

2. It will be recalled that the States parties to the above-mentioned Convention, at the twenty-second meeting of the Fourteenth Meeting of the States Parties, held on 15 January 1992, decided as follows:

> 1. To replace paragraph 6 of article 8 of the Convention with the paragraph "The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall provide the necessary staff and facilities for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee under the Convention";
>
> 2. To add a new paragraph, as article 8, paragraph 7, as follows:
>
> "The members of the Committee established under the present Convention shall, with the approval of the General Assembly, receive emoluments from United Nations resources on such terms and conditions as the General Assembly may decide";
>
> ...
>
> 4. That the amendment shall enter into force when it has been approved by the General Assembly and accepted by a two-thirds majority of States parties which shall have so notified the Secretary-General as depositary.

3. The General Assembly endorsed the amendment at its forty-seventh session (resolution 47/111). In accordance with the above-quoted paragraph 4, it will enter into force when it is accepted by the required number of States parties which shall have so notified the Secretary-General.

Annex II

Status of contributions to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination as at 30 June 2008

(United States dollars)

State party	*Contributions payable as at 31 January 1993*	*1993 assessments*	*Total collections from 1993 to 2006 for 1993 and prior years*[a]	*Contributions payable as at 30 June 2008*
Afghanistan	1 348.00	877.00	—	2 225.00
Algeria	—	1 177.00	1 177.00	—
Antigua and Barbuda	—	877.00	877.00	—
Argentina	690.00	1 941.00	2 631.00	—
Australia	—	3 811.00	3 811.00	—
Austria	—	2 341.00	2 341.00	—
Bahamas	—	896.00	896.00	—
Bahrain	—	920.00	920.00	—
Bangladesh	876.00	877.00	1 753.00	—
Barbados	362.00	877.00	1 239.00	—
Belarus	1 426.00	1 869.00	—	3 295.00
Belgium	—	2 900.00	2 900.00	—
Bolivia	362.00	877.00	—	1 239.00
Botswana	—	877.00	877.00	—
Brazil	1 792.00	4 056.00	5 848.00	—
Bulgaria	431.00	1 104.00	1 535.00	—
Burkina Faso	6 629.83	877.00	—	7 506.83
Burundi	8 899.00	877.00	—	9 776.00
Cambodia	2 244.00	877.00	3 121.00	
Cameroon	942.04	877.00	8 403.40	1 819.04
Canada		7 004.00	7 004.00	—
Cape Verde	7 162.00	877.00	—	8 039.00
Central African Republic	7 783.89	877.00	—	8 660.89
Chad	211.40	877.00	—	1 088.40
Chile	1 006.00	1 015.00	2 021.00	—
China	—	2 367.00	2 367.00	—
Colombia	-0.09	1 109.00	1 109.00	
Congo	2 597.00	877.00	—	3 474.00
Costa Rica	3 909.86	872.00	4 867.88	—
Côte d'Ivoire	1 937.00	896.00	2 833.00	—
Cuba	—	1 035.00	1 035.00	—
Cyprus	—	896.00	896.00	—
Czechoslovakia[b]	-502.00		-502.00	

State party	Contributions payable as at 31 January 1993	1993 assessments	Total collections from 1993 to 2006 for 1993 and prior years[a]	Contributions payable as at 30 June 2008
Democratic Republic of the Congo[c]	-45.00	877.00	—	832.00
Denmark	—	2 122.00	2 122.00	—
Dominican Republic	3 523.00	892.00	—	4 415.00
Ecuador	913.00	916.00	1 829.00	—
Egypt	—	994.00	994.00	—
El Salvador	7 162.00	877.00	—	8 039.00
Estonia	—	1 205.00	1 205.00	
Ethiopia	-514.00	877.00	363.00	—
Fiji	362.00	877.00	1 239.00	—
Finland	—	2 007.00	2 007.00	—
France	—	12 590.00	12 590.00	—
Gabon	892.00	892.00	—	1 784.00
Gambia	7 831.00	877.00	—	8 708.00
Germany	—	18 294.00	18 294.00	—
Ghana	—	877.00	877.00	—
Greece	—	1 524.00	1 524.00	—
Guatemala	1 389.20	896.00	2 285.20	—
Guinea	903.80	877.00	—	1 780.80
Guyana	—	877.00	877.00	—
Haiti	1 750.00	877.00	—	2 627.00
Holy See	—	877.00	877.00	—
Hungary	—	1 199.00	1 199.00	—
Iceland	—	916.00	916.00	—
India	—	1 562.00	1 562.00	—
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	—	2 411.00	2 411.00	—
Iraq	-248.92	1 117.00	868.08	—
Israel	1 949.00	1 320.00	3 269.00	—
Italy	0.00	9 456.00	9 456.00	
Jamaica	362.00	877.00	1 239.00	—
Jordan	—	877.00	877.00	—
Kuwait	501.00	1 332.00	1 833.00	—
Lao People's Democratic Republic	—	877.00	877.00	—
Latvia	—	1 322.00	1 322.00	—
Lebanon	4 822.00	877.00	5 699.00	—
Lesotho	1 348.00	877.00	2 225.00	—
Liberia	7 139.00	877.00	—	8 016.00
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	2 053.00	1 313.00	3 366.00	—

State party	*Contributions payable as at 31 January 1993*	*1993 assessments*	*Total collections from 1993 to 2006 for 1993 and prior years*[a]	*Contributions payable as at 30 June 2008*
Luxembourg	—	975.00	975.00	—
Madagascar	901.87	877.00	1 889.82	
Maldives	—	877.00	877.00	—
Mali	9 850.00	877.00	—	10 727.00
Malta	—	877.00	877.00	—
Mauritania	2 285.00	877.00	—	3 162.00
Mauritius	—	877.00	877.00	—
Mexico	—	2 567.00	2 567.00	—
Mongolia	876.00	877.00	1 753.00	—
Morocco	—	912.00	912.00	—
Mozambique	5 097.00	877.00	5 974.00	—
Nepal	876.00	877.00	1 753.00	—
Netherlands	—	3 750.00	3 750.00	—
New Zealand	—	1 331.00	1 331.00	—
Nicaragua	2 244.00	877.00	4 000.00	
Niger	2 750.00	877.00	—	3 627.00
Nigeria	1 899.00	1 251.00	3 150.00	—
Norway	-15.00	1 941.00	1 926.00	—
Pakistan	0.01	975.00	975.01	—
Panama	1 122.00	896.00	2 018.00	—
Papua New Guinea	362.00	877.00	1 214.00	25.00
Peru	2 469.00	975.00	3 444.00	—
Philippines	-211.11	986.00	774.89	—
Poland	610.00	1 744.00	2 354.00	—
Portugal	—	1 260.00	1 260.00	—
Qatar	393.00	955.00	1 348.00	—
Republic of Korea	—	2 425.00	2 425.00	—
Romania	1 819.00	1 184.00	3 003.00	—
Russian Federation	18 149.00	12 750.00	30 899.00	—
Rwanda	876.00	877.00	—	1 753.00
Saint Lucia	—	877.00	877.00	—
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	6 637.00	877.00	—	7 514.00
Senegal	-816.19	877.00	69.00	
Seychelles	876.00	877.00	666.14	1 086.86
Sierra Leone	8 659.00	877.00	—	9 536.00
Slovenia	—	1 205.00	1 205.00	—
Solomon Islands	2 244.00	877.00	3 121.00	—
Somalia	7 028.00	877.00	—	7 905.00

State party	*Contributions payable as at 31 January 1993*	*1993 assessments*	*Total collections from 1993 to 2006 for 1993 and prior years*[a]	*Contributions payable as at 30 June 2008*
Spain	—	4 777.00	4 777.00	—
Sri Lanka	—	877.00	877.00	—
Sudan	3 510.00	877.00	—	4 387.00
Suriname	3 084.00	877.00	3 961.00	—
Swaziland	362.00	877.00	1 239.00	—
Sweden	—	3 003.00	3 003.00	—
Syrian Arab Republic	385.00	936.00	1 321.00	—
Togo	1 367.04	877.00	—	2 244.04
Tonga	798.00	877.00	—	1 675.00
Trinidad and Tobago	820.17	955.00	1 775.17	—
Tunisia	—	916.00	916.00	—
Uganda	362.00	877.00	1 239.00	—
Ukraine	3 026.00	4 820.00	7 846.00	—
United Arab Emirates	—	1 280.00	1 280.00	—
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	—	10 836.00	10 836.00	—
United Republic of Tanzania	1 898.00	877.00	—	2 775.00
Uruguay	385.00	936.00	1 321.00	—
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	—	1 788.00	2 933.47	
Viet Nam	2 244.00	877.00	3 121.00	—
Yemen	924.00	877.00	—	1 801.00
Zambia[d]	-2 146.88	877.00	-1 269.88	
Zimbabwe	993.00	1 093.00	—	2 086.00
Total	**187 190.92**	**223 408.00**	**277 603.18**	**141 809.82**[e]
Former Yugoslavia	1 435.00	1 122.00	—	2 557.00

[a] In accordance with records of the Contributions Service as at 30 June 2008. Amounts reflect total collections, including overpayments.

[b] An amount of $502.00, which represents the surplus of the 1991 contribution made by the former Czechoslovakia, has been reimbursed to the Governments of the Czech Republic ($334.00) and the Slovak Republic ($168.00).

[c] Effective 17 May 1997, Zaire was renamed Democratic Republic of the Congo.

[d] An amount of $1,471.28 has been reimbursed to the Government of Zambia.

[e] Excludes credits/overpayment amounts held in suspense account.

United Nations A/63/307

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 August 2008
English
Original: Spanish

Sixty-third session
Item 44 of the provisional agenda*
Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS

Letter dated 15 August 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the ministerial declaration entitled "Prevention through education" adopted at the first meeting of Ministers of Health and Education to stop HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Mexico City on 1 August 2008 and attended by representatives of 31 Latin American and Caribbean countries (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as documents of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, under item 44 of the provisional agenda.

(*Signed*) Socorro **Rovirosa**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations

* A/63/150.

08-46703 (E) 210808 210808

Annex to the letter dated 15 August 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English/Spanish]

First Meeting of Ministers of Health and Education to Stop HIV and STIs in Latin America and the Caribbean

Prevention through education

1. Preamble

Gathered in Mexico City for the XVII International AIDS Conference, with the objective of strengthening the response to the HIV epidemic in formal and informal education, we, the Ministers of Health and Education of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean:

1.1 Affirm our commitment to the right to enjoy the best possible health; and the right to education, non-discrimination and well-being of current and future generations;

1.2 Reiterate our conviction that education and health can act in synergy to prevent the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs); and that education and health are mutually reinforcing, enabling comprehensive human development;

1.3 Recognize the responsibility of the State to promote human development, including education and health, as well as to implement effective strategies to educate upcoming generations and protect them from infection, and to combat all forms of discrimination;

1.4 Formally signal our commitment to guarantee full adherence to the right to health and other related rights established in international human rights documents and standards, in particular access to quality education for all children, adolescents and youth in our countries in an environment free from violence, stigma and discrimination. This requires increasing and strengthening efforts to ensure that students directly affected by HIV have access to, and remain in, school;

1.5 Reiterate our governments' existing commitments regarding human rights, HIV and AIDS, sexual and reproductive health and the well-being of children, adolescents and youth (see enclosure);

1.6 Recognize the decisive role of families in the well-being and development of our present and future generations, as well as the need to ensure that HIV and STI prevention efforts include all relevant actors in society;

1.7 Acknowledge the consensus documents developed and published within the United Nations system which largely reflect the available scientific evidence in this field.

2. Whereas:

2.1 HIV is an epidemic that demands a multi-sectoral, coordinated response that is both immediate and sustained;

2.2 In Latin America and the Caribbean, HIV is primarily transmitted via unprotected sex. For this reason, diverse expressions of sexuality and the various contexts that heighten vulnerability to HIV should be taken into account;

2.3 Sexuality is an essential part of being human and is expressed throughout life. Childhood and adolescence are significant stages in the personal development of peoples and their countries, and there is therefore a need for quality education that includes sex education both as a human right and as a contribution to present and future quality of life;

2.4 Unequal relationships between the sexes and among age groups, socio-economic and cultural differences, and diversity in sexual orientation and identities, combined with risk factors, create situations of increased vulnerability to HIV/STI infection;

2.5 A considerable percentage of young people engage in their first sexual encounter at an early age, often without any protection against sexually transmitted infections;

2.6 Comprehensive sex education starting in early childhood favours the gradual acquisition of information and knowledge necessary to develop the skills and attitudes needed for a full and healthy life as well as to reduce sexual and reproductive health risks;

2.7 Scientific evidence demonstrates that comprehensive sex education, including HIV/STI prevention methods — such as the correct and consistent use of male and female condoms, access to HIV/STI diagnostic tests and full STI treatment, and having fewer sexual partners — does not lead to earlier or more frequent relations;

2.8 Among those who are not yet sexually active, scientific evidence shows that comprehensive sex education including information on different prevention methods and encouraging responsible behaviour promotes independence and thus young people's capacity to decide when to initiate sexual activity;

2.9 A response to the epidemic that is effective over the long term will only be possible if prevention strategies are successful. The only way to fulfil the global commitment to providing universal access to anti-retroviral treatment for people with HIV is to strengthen prevention efforts to reduce the spread of the epidemic and the future demand for treatment.

3. In the light of the foregoing, we, the Ministers of Health and Education, agree to:

3.1 Implement and/or strengthen multi-sectoral strategies for comprehensive sex education and promotion of sexual health, including HIV/STI prevention, in a manner which complements the efforts we undertake in connection with our own responsibilities and functions. To ensure that these efforts are affordable and sustainable, we will strengthen cooperation between the two sectors by establishing formal mechanisms for planning, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up of joint efforts, as well as by establishing links with other sectors;

3.2 Comprehensive sex education will have a broad perspective based on human rights and respect for the values of a democratic, pluralistic society where families and communities thrive. It will include ethical, biological, emotional, social, cultural, and gender aspects as well as topics related to the diversity of sexual orientations and identities, in accordance with the legal framework of each country, to promote respect for differences, reject any form of discrimination, and foster responsible and informed decision-making among young people regarding their first sexual relations;

3.3 Evaluate our current educational programmes during 2009 and 2010 to identify to what extent comprehensive sex education is incorporated and implemented in the curriculum at all levels of education and in all teaching systems under the jurisdiction of the Ministries of Education;

3.4 Update, before the end of 2010, the content and teaching methods of the curricula falling within the jurisdiction of the Ministries of Education to include comprehensive sex education, in collaboration with the Ministries of Health. This exercise will be guided by the best scientific evidence available, endorsed by the relevant international organizations, in consultation with experts, and take account of civil society and communities, including children, adolescents, youth, teachers, and families;

3.5 Review, update and reinforce the training of educational personnel, from the teacher-training stage to training for existing teachers. By 2015, all initial training and refresher training under the jurisdiction of the Ministries of Education, for both formal and informal education will include the new comprehensive sex education curricula;

3.6 Ensure that the design of health promotion programmes extensively involves the community and families, including adolescents and youth, in order to recognize their needs and aspirations regarding sexual and reproductive health, as well as HIV/STI prevention, and to encourage their involvement in developing and implementing appropriate responses;

3.7 Ensure that health services are youth friendly, are delivered with full respect for human dignity and, within each country's legislation, that they take into account the specific sexual and reproductive health needs and demands of adolescents and young people, considering the diversity of sexual orientation and identity, and establishing suitable referral procedures within the health sector;

3.8 Ensure that health services provide for everyone, especially adolescents and young people, effective access to counselling and testing for HIV and STIs, full treatment for STIs, condoms and instruction in their correct and consistent use, guidance regarding reproductive decisions, including guidance for people with HIV, and treatment for drug and alcohol abuse;

3.9 Promote outreach efforts with the mass media and civil society in order to improve the quality of the information and messages disseminated and to make them more consistent with the curriculum for comprehensive sex education and promotion of sexual health;

3.10 Work with the executive and legislative branches of government, in those countries where it is appropriate, to guarantee a suitable legal framework and the

necessary budget for the implementation of comprehensive sex education and promotion of sexual health;

3.11 Ensure the existence of a formal mechanism for reporting discrimination in public and private education and health services, and work proactively to identify and correct such discrimination, through efforts within government institutions and society, including national institutions for the defence of human rights, civil society organizations and other similar entities;

3.12 Identify and/or mobilize resources in each of our countries for a detailed impact assessment of five or more strategies for comprehensive sex education, sexual health promotion and HIV/STI prevention in adolescents and young people, by 2015;

3.13 Recommend the inclusion of these undertakings for discussion and promotion at the XVIII Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government in San Salvador, El Salvador in October 2008; the V Summit of the Americas in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, in April 2009; the fifth Central American Congress on HIV (CONCASIDA) in San José, Costa Rica in October 2009; and the Latin American and Caribbean Forum on HIV/AIDS and STDs in Lima, Peru, in May 2009;

3.14 Recognize the need for technical and financial support from multilateral agencies and international funding sources to achieve the commitments in this Declaration;

3.15 In order to fulfil these undertakings, we hereby establish an Inter-sectoral Working Group to follow up the commitments in this Declaration and request that UNAIDS and its co-sponsors participate in that Working Group.

4. To accomplish these undertakings, we will seek to achieve the following targets:

4.1 Reduce by 75 per cent the number of schools under the jurisdiction of the Ministries of Education that have failed to institutionalize comprehensive sex education;

4.2 By 2015, reduce by 50 per cent the number of adolescents and young people who are not covered by health services that address their sexual and reproductive health needs appropriately.

With the conviction that these actions reflect our countries' commitment to the children, adolescents and young people of Latin America and the Caribbean, with fraternal countries and with the international community, reflecting our contribution to the global effort to confront the HIV pandemic, we have adopted this declaration and assumed its undertakings. Done on 1 August 2008, in Mexico City.

Enclosure

States' commitments on human rights, sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS

- The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948);[1]
- The WHO Constitution;[2]
- The United Nations Millennium Declaration, of 8 September 2000;[3]
- The Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS 2001);[4]
- The World Summit for Social Development: Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development (1995);[5]
- The political declaration and further action and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, of 10 June 2000;[6]
- Key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on the Population and Development, of 2 July 1999;[7]
- The Declaration of the Tenth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, of 18 November 2000;[8]
- The Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS, of 14 February 2001;[9]
- The Declaration of Ministers of Education, Buenos Aires, 30 March 2007;[10]
- The San José Pact;[11]
- The Andean Charter for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights;[12]
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;[13]
- The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;[14]
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 16 December 1966;[15]

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1 http://www.unhchr.ch/udhr/lang/eng.htm.
2 http://www.who.int/governance/eb/constitution/en/index.html.
3 http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm.
4 http://data.unaids.org/publications/irc-pub03/aidsdeclaration_en.pdf.
5 http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/wssd/agreements/decparta.htm.
6 http://www.unescap.org/esid/GAD/Events/BeijingPlatform1999/recommendation.pdf.
7 http://www.un.org/popin/unpopcom/32ndsess/gass/215a1e.pdf.
8 http://www.sre.gob.mx/dgomra/cibero/Documentos/xcumbre.htm.
9 http://www.pancap.org/doc.php?id=1.
10 http://www.unesco.cl/medios/biblioteca/documentos/declaracion_de_buenos_aires_prelac_2_ingles.pdf.
11 http://www.oas.org/juridico/English/treaties/b-32.html.
12 http://www.uasb.edu.ec/padh/revista19/documentos/Cartaandinaparalapromocionyprotecciondelosderechoshumanos.pdf.
13 http://untreaty.un.org/English/TreatyEvent2001/pdf/03e.pdf.
14 http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm.
15 http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/treaty5_asp.htm.

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 16 December 1966;[16]
- NGO Declaration on Education for All, Dakar, Senegal 25 April 2000;[17]
- World Education Forum, Dakar Framework for Action, Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000;[18]

Expert consensus documents

- Sexually transmitted Infections among adolescents: The need for adequate health services (WHO);[19]
- Global consultation on the health services' response to the prevention and care of HIV/AIDS among young people: Achieving the global goals: access to services (WHO);[20]
- Preventing HIV/AIDS in young people: A systematic review of the evidence from developing countries (UNAIDS Inter-agency Task Team on Young People);[21]
- Impact of HIV and sexual health education on sexual behaviour of young people: a review update (UNAIDS).[22]

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[16] http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/treaty4_asp.htm.

[17] http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/files/47105/11806987065WEF2000_NGO_EN.pdf/WEF2000_NGO_EN.pdf.

[18] http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001211/121147e.pdf.

[19] http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/publications/stis_among_adolescents/index.html.

[20] http://www.who.int/child_adolescent_health/documents/9241591323/en/index.html.

[21] http://www.who.int/child_adolescent_health/documents/trs_938/en/index.html.

[22] http://data.unaids.org/Publications/IRC-pub01/JC010-Imp.

United Nations A/63/308

General Assembly

Distr.: General
18 August 2008

Original: English

Sixty-third session
Item 63 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Promotion and protection on the rights of the children: follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children

Follow-up to the special session of the General Assembly on Children

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared in response to the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 58/282 that the Secretary-General report to it regularly on progress achieved in realizing the commitments set out in the final document of the twenty-seventh special session of the Assembly, entitled "A world fit for children", with a view to identifying new challenges and making recommendations on actions needed to achieve further progress.** The report notes that failure to achieve the goals of the special session of the General Assembly on children (resolution S/27-2, annex) will significantly undermine efforts towards realizing the aspirations of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and beyond. It calls for a greater sense of urgency by Governments and the international community to achieve the goals of the special session on children.

* A/63/150 and Corr. 1.
** The report uses the best available data at the time of writing.

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I. Introduction

1. At the historic special session of the General Assembly on children, which was held from 8 to 10 May 2002, delegations from 190 countries adopted the Declaration and Plan of Action set out in the document entitled "A world fit for children" (resolution S-27/2, annex). The outcome document committed Governments to a time-bound set of goals for children and young people, with a particular focus on: (a) promoting healthy lives; (b) providing quality education; (c) protecting children against abuse, exploitation and violence; and (d) combating HIV/AIDS.

2. The present report is an update of progress made in the follow-up to the special session. The report follows the previous annual review of progress presented at the fifty-eighth session (A/58/333), the fifty-ninth session (A/59/274), the sixtieth session (A/60/207), the sixty-first session (A/61/270) and the sixty-second session (A/62/259) of the General Assembly.

3. The present report also follows the commemorative high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly devoted to the follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children, which was held from 11 to 13 December 2007. At that meeting, the Secretary-General presented a report on "Children and the Millennium Development Goals: progress towards a world fit for children" (A/62/259), which provided new information and analysis on how far the world had come in reducing child and maternal mortality and malnutrition; ensuring universal primary education; protecting children against abuse, exploitation and violence; and combating HIV/AIDS. In his report, the Secretary-General noted that despite progress in many countries, actions are still needed everywhere to accelerate progress towards the goals of the special session.

4. The outcome of the commemorative high-level meeting was the adoption of a Declaration by the General Assembly (resolution 62/88), which reaffirmed the commitment of Governments to the full implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action contained in the outcome document of the 2002 special session on children. Governments emphasized their commitment to pursuing a common vision of ensuring the well-being of all children in all societies, and with a collective sense of urgency.

5. Follow-up to the commitments of the special session on children is also taking place in the context of other major international conferences and summits. Notable among them are the Climate Change Conference in Bali in 2007, the 2006 High-Level Meeting on AIDS (see resolution 60/262, annex), the 2005 World Summit (see resolution 60/1), and the International Conference on Financing for Development held in 2002 (see resolution 56/210 B).

II. Progress in the four major areas of "A world fit for children"

6. The goals of "A world fit for children" are supportive of the Millennium Development Goals. In addition, the goals of the special session place emphasis on improvements in child protection which, although reflected in the Millennium Declaration, are not part of the Millennium Development Goals. Furthermore, the

outcome document sets detailed goals for children. The present assessment of progress in the four major areas of the outcome document of the special session on children is therefore in the context of the relationship between two mutually reinforcing sets of goals.

A. Promoting healthy lives

7. The outcome document aims at achieving a reduction of under-five mortality by one third by 2010 (compared with 2000); the fourth Millennium Development Goal aims at a two thirds reduction by 2015 (compared with 1990). Overall, there is progress towards those and other health-related goals, but not at the required pace.

8. Child mortality is declining globally, with the number of children dying before their fifth birthday falling below 10 million in 2007. Several countries have reduced child deaths in a significant way, even at relatively low levels of income per capita.

9. Lessons from the successful countries indicate the necessity of using high-impact, relatively low-cost solutions to accelerate the reduction of under-five mortality, including fully immunizing children, vitamin A supplementation, exclusive breastfeeding and appropriate weaning practices, oral rehydration therapy for diarrhoeal diseases, antibiotics for pneumonia, insecticide-treated mosquito nets and effective antimalarial medicines for malaria, as well as home-based management of major childhood illnesses.

10. Immunization, one of the high-impact solutions, has received considerable attention. Global vaccination coverage trends continue to be positive, with coverage of the three doses of combined diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus vaccine estimated at 79 per cent in 2006. The greatest improvements have occurred in sub-Saharan Africa, where coverage increased from 52 per cent in 2000 to 72 per cent in 2006.

11. Furthermore, the campaign against measles has been an outstanding success. The number of deaths due to measles has continued to fall. The largest percentage reduction in estimated measles mortality has occurred in sub-Saharan Africa, where the number of such deaths declined from an estimated 396,000 in 2000 to 36,000 in 2006. Sub-Saharan Africa has achieved the United Nations goal of cutting measles deaths by 90 per cent well before the target date of 2010. Those gains helped to generate a strong decline in measles deaths worldwide, which fell from an estimated 757,000 to 242,000 in the period from 2000 to 2006.

12. There is also progress in maternal and neonatal tetanus elimination. Vaccination coverage with at least two doses of tetanus toxoid vaccine or tetanus-diphtheria toxoid vaccine was estimated at 69 per cent in 2006, while an estimated 81 per cent of newborns were protected against neonatal tetanus through immunization, up from 79 per cent in 2005. Coverage rates increased in a number of countries through routine immunization systems and campaigns.

13. Wild polio virus cases declined from 1,997 in 2006 to 1,307 in 2007, due mostly to a reduction in the number of cases in Nigeria. Polio transmission was restricted to geographically limited areas in the four remaining polio-endemic countries (Afghanistan, India, Nigeria and Pakistan). More than 400 million children under age five in 27 countries were vaccinated multiple times against polio in those countries and in others with outbreaks in 2007 as well as in other high-risk areas. Partnerships between Governments, the Global Alliance for Vaccines and

Immunization (GAVI), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) have enabled marked improvements in immunization. Prospects for further improvement have come through the establishment in 2006 of the International Finance Facility for Immunization.

14. As of the end of 2006, 164 countries had introduced hepatitis B vaccine in routine immunization, while haemophilus influenzae type B vaccine was introduced nationwide in 104 countries. In 2006, GAVI added two new vaccines to its portfolio: pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (for pneumonia reduction) and rotavirus vaccine (for diarrhoea reduction).

15. Nevertheless, the proportion of fully immunized children is far from the 2010 target of 90 per cent set at the special session on children. Across the world routine immunization services still fail to reach some 27 million children below the age of one and about 40 million pregnant women. In particular, immunization coverage has plummeted in countries dealing with emergencies. Many countries have yet to eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus. Overall, many Governments are struggling to meet immunization targets because of weak health service delivery systems.

16. Other high-impact interventions are also being provided on a much larger scale. There is an increase in the number of countries achieving and sustaining high vitamin A coverage. In preliminary data for 2006, of 74 countries reporting on two-dose coverage, 35 attained at least 70 per cent coverage, compared with 26 in 2004.

17. Increased global attention to malaria has also contributed to greater flows of resources, allowing scaling up of interventions. The use of insecticide-treated mosquito nets is on the increase in sub-Saharan Africa, where 16 of 20 countries with trend data have reported at least a threefold increase in coverage since 2000.

18. Some 34 countries reported over 90 per cent of households consuming adequately iodized salt in 2007, up from 21 in 2002. An additional 28 countries are making progress, having achieved greater than 70 per cent household coverage.

19. However, there are concerns about several other child health and related issues. Diarrhoeal diseases continue to account for some 1.8 million deaths a year among children under five, and an estimated 143 million children under five in developing countries continue to suffer from under-nutrition. The current annual average rate of reduction in underweight prevalence is only 1.5 per cent, indicating that many developing countries will not meet the hunger target of Millennium Development Goal 1.

20. The greatest proportions of children going hungry continue to be found in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Poor progress in those regions means that it is unlikely that the global target will be met.

21. There are improvements in exclusive breastfeeding rates in sub-Saharan Africa and in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, for which the latest estimates are 30 per cent and 19 per cent, respectively. In many countries, however, rates still remain very low, and the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes is often not fully implemented.

22. Preventing maternal deaths and improving maternal health will also require greater attention, and recent data on maternal mortality show that Millennium Development Goal 5 is far from being reached. Maternal mortality levels remain unacceptably high across the developing world, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa

and South Asia. Every year more than half a million women die from complications of pregnancy and childbirth. Coverage by skilled birth attendants is still low in many parts of the world, although some countries are intensifying their efforts.

23. Child survival and development are also closely linked to the provision of clean water and the achievement of good standards of hygiene and sanitation. Between 1990 and 2004, across the developing world, the proportion of people without access to an improved source of drinking water decreased from 29 to 20 per cent. Nevertheless, more than 125 million children under five years of age still live in households that are using unsafe sources of drinking water.

24. Half the population of the developing world lacks basic sanitation. The Millennium Development Goals require halving the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015 (compared with 1990). If trends since 1990 continue, the world is likely to miss the Millennium Development Goal target on sanitation by almost 600 million people. The health, economic and social repercussions of poor sanitation and hygiene and the lack of safe drinking water are immense. Poor sanitation and hygiene and the lack of safe drinking water contribute to about 88 per cent of deaths due to diarrhoeal diseases in children under age five. Infestation of intestinal worms caused by open defecation affects hundreds of millions of predominantly school-age children, resulting in reduced physical growth, weakened physical condition and impaired cognitive functions.

25. The International Year of Sanitation was welcomed by the international community on the first day of January 2008. This commemoration is being used to highlight the need for urgent action on behalf of the more than 40 per cent of the world's population who continue to live without improved sanitation. The year will include major regional conferences on sanitation to share best practices and help accelerate progress, including those that focus on sanitation in schools. It will also help encourage public and private partnerships to help mobilize the comparative strengths of each sector, advocate and raise awareness on sanitation, leverage additional funding and develop country-level plans of action.

26. Overall, the world is still falling short of agreed international child health and related targets. Despite improvements, most of the international goals related to health will not be achieved at the current pace. There is an urgent need to accelerate the scaling up of high-impact, cost-effective health and nutrition interventions for the most vulnerable children and women. There is also the need to pursue the strengthening of health systems in a more aggressive and sustained manner.

B. Providing quality education

27. "A world fit for children" calls for expanding and improving early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. Worldwide, primary and secondary education account for the bulk of education expenditure. To date, about half of all countries have early childhood care and education programmes for children under three. With universal primary education still an elusive goal in many developing countries, investment priorities are unlikely to change.

28. Furthermore, despite progress, the scaling up of successful community and family care practices remains a major challenge in many countries. The coverage of

parenting — or equivalent family and community care — initiatives remains low overall. There is a pressing need for more effective communication for behavioural change towards improved care for children.

29. The goals of the special session also aim at increasing net primary school enrolment or participation in alternative, good quality primary education programmes to at least 90 per cent by 2010 when compared with 2000 levels. The Millennium Development Goals require that by 2015, children everywhere will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

30. The net enrolment ratio in primary education in developing regions increased to 88 per cent in the school year 2004/05, up from 80 per cent in 1990/91. Two thirds of the increase occurred since 1999.

31. Though progress has been made in reducing the number of children who are not in school, the number remains high. Based on enrolment data, about 72 million children of primary school age were not in school in 2005; 57 per cent of them were girls. As high as this number seems, surveys show that it underestimates the actual number of children who, though enrolled, are not attending school. Official data are also not usually available from countries in conflict or post-conflict situations. If data from those countries were reflected in global estimates, the enrolment picture would be even less optimistic, and while trends in learning achievement are far from clear, an increasing number of assessments show low and unequal learning outcomes.

32. The children most likely to drop out of school or to not attend at all are those from poorer households or living in rural areas. For example, nearly one third of children of primary school age in rural areas of the developing world are out of school, compared with 18 per cent of children in the same age group living in cities.

33. Sub-Saharan Africa has made significant progress over the last few years in expanding primary school enrolment. However, the region still trails behind others, with 30 per cent of its children of primary school age out of school.[1] A strong push will be needed over the next few years to enrol all children in school and to fulfil their right to a quality education.

34. There have been significant advances towards achieving gender parity. By 2005, some 91 developing countries had achieved gender parity in primary enrolment.[2] Yet, there are still some 50 million girls still not attending primary school, with nearly three quarters of them belonging to various excluded groups. Girls continue to be excluded from education more often than boys. In a majority of developing countries, girls continue to face discrimination with regard to access to school. As a result, they comprise about 57 per cent of all out-of-school children. The absence of water and sanitation facilities in many schools also particularly affects girls.

35. A persistent challenge in several regions is the exclusion suffered by children from disadvantaged groups and backgrounds, who often require additional and targeted measures to ensure inclusion, some beyond the field of education. While

[1] United Nations Millennium Development Goals Report 2007.

[2] UNICEF, *Progress for Children: A Report Card on Gender Parity and Primary Education*, No. 2 (New York 2005).

non-formal and alternative education strategies can provide learning opportunities for many children, they are often inadequately resourced.

36. Quality is a serious concern in the primary education system in many countries. Low performance reflects widespread difficulties in the implementation and financing of education reforms, evidence of which can be seen in inadequate learning materials, unsafe and unhealthy school environments, gender discrimination, lack of child-centred learning approaches and shortages of qualified teachers, particularly those who are female. Teacher shortages are also aggravated by HIV and AIDS in some countries. Teachers are often not provided adequate training and service conditions. Poor education quality profoundly affects prospects for gender equality and women's empowerment.

37. Progress in expanding primary school enrolment has led to increases in the demand for post-primary education. It is estimated that 185 million children of secondary school age are missing out on secondary education and that 127 million of those children are still attending primary school. Inequalities affecting children from rural areas and poorer families are also dramatically magnified at the secondary level. Many countries have limited capacity for the provision of education beyond the primary level.

38. While education responses in emergencies are increasingly contributing to post-crisis recovery, there are often great challenges in the longer-term rebuilding and reform of educational systems. Fragile States have emerged as a key priority in 2005, since 35 such States accounted for 37 per cent of all out-of-school children, and the challenge in these is to find workable delivery and financing mechanisms.

39. Overall, millions of children are excluded from their right to basic education, and in particular to primary education. Access to primary education is still hampered by many factors, including gender, geographical location, income differentiation and social status. In addition, the poor quality of education in many countries continues to constrain the achievement of universal completion rates.

40. There is a need to expand investment in early childhood care and development to ensure that the most marginalized and girls attend and complete school and that schools are child friendly, aiming for quality learning conditions.

C. Protecting against abuse, exploitation and violence

41. There have been documented improvements since the special session in specific issues regarding the protection of children from abuse, exploitation and violence, including reductions in child labour and the adoption of a more focused and coordinated approach to end female genital mutilation/cutting and the recruitment of children by armed groups.

42. Progress has also been made in the generation of data. National data on key child protection indicators are increasingly available. The multiple indicator cluster surveys, Demographic and Health Surveys and other national surveys have provided data on child labour, child marriage and birth registration for some 100 countries. Almost 60 countries have produced national child labour statistics, and special efforts are being made to collect data on children engaged in hazardous work. A total of 29 countries had collected data on child discipline, and 27 on female genital mutilation/cutting, by the end of 2007.

43. Many countries are also strengthening their overall child protection capacities, including legislative and enforcement systems. There is a growing understanding of the significance of systematic approaches to protection, primarily through legal and social welfare systems and through addressing social norms.

44. Significant new legislation and action plans on trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation have been adopted by Governments since the special session in 2002. In 2007, the number of States that had ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography grew to 124 from 115 in 2006.

45. There has been important progress in national ratification of international instruments on child labour. Convention No. 182 (1999) of the International Labour Organization concerning the prohibition of and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour has now been ratified by 167 countries and Convention No. 138 concerning the minimum age for admission to employment has been ratified by 149 countries.

46. Actions to end the exploitation of children in times of conflict continue. In 2007 the number of countries ratifying the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict grew to 119, compared with 110 in 2006.

47. The Paris Commitments, consistent with existing international legal standards and addressed to States, define measures to protect children involved in hostilities and help them reintegrate into their families and communities while the complementary Paris Principles, addressed to practitioners, provide detailed programme guidance. By the end of 2007, 66 States had endorsed the Paris Commitments.

48. The General Assembly adopted resolution 62/214 on assistance and support for victims of sexual abuse and exploitation by United Nations Staff in early 2008. There has also been significant progress in the implementation of the monitoring and reporting mechanism established in application of Security Council resolution 1612 (2005).

49. A detailed 10-year strategic review of the Graça Machel report entitled "Impact of armed conflict on children" (see A/51/306 and Add. 1) was co-convened by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and UNICEF. A special consultation process reached more than 1,000 children and young people in 18 war-affected countries. The findings of the review were submitted to the General Assembly by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (see A/62/228). The key recommendations will help strengthen partnership efforts to prevent and reduce the impact of conflicts on children.

50. In June 2006, 42 countries signed the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, which aims at preventing and reducing armed violence. The Declaration aligns itself with the Millennium Development Goals by committing signatories to achieving, by 2015, measurable reductions in the global burden of armed violence and tangible improvements in human security worldwide.

51. The Secretary-General transmitted the report of the independent expert for the United Nations study on violence against children to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session (A/61/299). The report generated considerable momentum and highlighted the universality and the magnitude of the problem of violence against

children. The 12 overarching recommendations of the independent expert, complemented by additional specific recommendations, offer a road map for the prevention of and response to violence against children in the home and family, educational settings, in care and justice systems, the workplace and the community. The recommendations in the report are stimulating new areas of partnership to improve the protection of children.

52. A global coordinated strategy for the abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting in one generation was developed in 2007. Important progress was made in 2006 and 2007 in supporting Governments and civil society to strengthen justice systems to the benefit of children in all regions of the world.

53. Continued positive growth is observed in social protection for the most vulnerable families, with social protection initiatives woven into national strategies, including through programmes that embed cash and social transfers within a larger protection scheme of family-based services, Government support and community and municipal distribution.

54. Greater inter-agency collaboration and consensus in child protection, often including non-governmental organizations, have been evident over the last several years, including the Inter-agency Panel on Juvenile Justice, the United Nations study on violence against children, the protection cluster and the Better Care Network.

55. The United Nations Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group has recently endorsed a note on the United Nations approach to justice for children. The note provides the guiding principles and framework for the organization's activities related to justice for children at the national level that apply in all circumstances, including in conflict prevention, crisis, post-crisis, conflict, post-conflict and development contexts. It is framed within the United Nations mandate to support the realization of human rights, poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals, and is a contribution to the Organization's coherence agenda in the rule of law area. The goal of the approach is to ensure that children are better served and protected by justice systems. It specifically aims at ensuring the full application of international norms and standards for all children who come into contact with justice and related systems as victims, witnesses and alleged offenders or for other reasons requiring judicial, state administrative or non-state adjudicatory intervention.

56. However, despite those successes, several challenges persist in protecting children against abuse, exploitation and violence.

57. While many developing countries have now achieved almost universal coverage in birth registration, several still have rates of 10 per cent or below. Globally, the number of unregistered children has remained steady since 2006 at around 50 million. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest proportion of children under five who are not registered — two out of three. The largest number of unregistered children is in South Asia — nearly 23 million.

58. Lack of measurable progress in social work remains a concern. Progress in addressing issues related to childhood disability continues to be mixed. Challenges persist in the integration of disability across sectors.

59. Data are often hard to gather on activities that are illegal, clandestine or otherwise sensitive. National child protection capacities remain weak overall, and funding is inconsistent and unpredictable. Capacity for routine data collection and for the integration of child protection indicators in public policy is low.

60. While there has been some important progress towards the reduction of child labour, much more remains to be done. Relevant data suggest that while the numbers of such children are declining, child labour, including its worst forms, remains a significant problem in many countries.

61. Furthermore, structural factors continue to slow the elimination of violence against children, including growing income inequality, migration, and threats to health, in particular the HIV/AIDS pandemic and armed conflict. Children continue to be recruited and associated with armed forces and groups.

62. Overall, progress in improving the protection of children has been mixed since the special session. There has been considerable progress in areas such as data gathering, birth registration and reduction of child labour, and many countries are implementing plans to address violence against children. Challenges persist however in several other areas, including the use of children in armed conflict, harmful traditional practices, trafficking and migration.

D. Combating HIV

63. Progress continues to be made towards the goals of the special session on HIV and children, however, at a pace slower than desired.

64. Globally, children under the age of 15 accounted for 2.1 million of the estimated 33.2 million people living with HIV in 2007. Some 420,000 children were newly infected with HIV and 290,000 died of AIDS in 2007 alone. Sub-Saharan Africa is home to nearly 90 per cent of all children living with HIV. Most children are infected with the virus during pregnancy and delivery or while breastfeeding. About 50 per cent of infants who contract HIV from their mothers die before their second birthday. Young people from 15 to 24 years of age accounted for about 40 per cent of new HIV infections among those over the age of 14 in 2007. In the same year, some 5.4 million young people from 15 to 24 years of age were living with HIV, of which 3.1 million were women.

65. In sub-Saharan Africa, the estimated number of children under age 18 who have been orphaned by AIDS more than doubled between 2000 and 2007, currently reaching 12.1 million. The HIV epidemic is a significant cause of child labour while also being one of its consequences in the region.

66. Nevertheless, there has been progress in combating the HIV pandemic since the special session on children. In low- and middle-income countries, the proportion of HIV-positive pregnant women receiving antiretroviral prophylaxis to reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to their children increased from 10 per cent in 2004 to 23 per cent in 2006. In Eastern and Southern Africa, the proportion of HIV-positive pregnant women receiving antiretroviral prophylaxis for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS (PMTCT) increased from 11 per cent in 2004 to 31 per cent in 2006. By the end of 2006, 21 low- and middle-income countries were on track to meet the 80 per cent antiretroviral coverage target for PMTCT by 2010, up from only 11 countries in 2005, and in low- and middle-income countries, an

estimated 127,300 HIV-positive children received antiretroviral treatment in 2006, compared with 75,000 in 2005, an increase of 70 per cent.

67. Furthermore, recent evidence suggests that HIV prevalence among pregnant women from 15 to 24 years of age attending antenatal clinics has declined since 2000/01 in 11 of 15 countries with sufficient data. Those include eight countries in Eastern and Southern Africa.

68. There is also progress in the protection and care of children affected by AIDS in many countries and in access for those children to social services. Progress has also been made in school enrolment rates for children who have lost both parents to the disease, although AIDS-affected children are still more likely than others to fall behind in school, to live in poorer households and to engage in child labour. A growing number of vulnerable children have access to education and social protection.

69. Comprehensive correct knowledge about HIV and AIDS is estimated to have increased by at least 10 per cent among young women in 17 countries and among young men in 5 countries. HIV prevalence among pregnant women aged 15 to 24 has declined in 11 of the 15 most-affected countries. Those declines seem to be consistent with an increase in condom use among young people, and there is some evidence of partner reduction.

70. There has been a rapid increase in mandatory life skills-based education with an HIV component in national school curricula. However, more needs to be done to address the stigma and discrimination related to HIV, with strategies drawing on rights-based communication approaches for social and behavioural change.

71. Although funding gaps persist, Governments and donors alike are allocating more resources to prevention, treatment and protection efforts. In 2007, some $10 billion were available to combat AIDS, up from $6.1 billion in 2004.

72. The Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS initiative continued to provide an important mechanism for stronger collaboration and networking on children and AIDS at all levels. International financial commitments to fighting AIDS have also grown impressively, and issues related to children continue to gain momentum. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Clinton Foundation, among others, are making major contributions towards universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

73. UNAIDS and its co-sponsors and partners have made real progress in developing a division of labour among different stakeholders. Inter-agency task teams now bring a broad range of agencies together to help develop norms and standards for HIV/AIDS interventions and identify priorities in support of national efforts and systems. There is greater coordination of the technical assistance provided by United Nations agencies to countries experiencing bottlenecks in implementation, and this should be further intensified.

74. However, much more needs to be done to prevent HIV infection among young people and adolescents. Although greater numbers of HIV-positive children and pregnant women are receiving treatment, there is still a long way to go before the promise of an AIDS-free generation is fulfilled.

75. There is an urgent need to implement new initiatives and scale up those that have already been tested and proven effective. Critically, antiretroviral treatment must be provided for women who require it for their own health. This will not only save their lives, but also help to assure the achievement of the target of reducing the proportion of infants who become HIV positive by 50 per cent by 2010. Health systems and the health care workforce must be strengthened. There is also the need to strengthen communities and families whose role is crucial to every aspect of a child-centred approach to AIDS. The reinforcement of education and social welfare systems is also key to the effective provision of support to children affected by HIV and AIDS.

III. Ways forward

76. The goals of the special session on children continue to receive attention from Governments and the international community. This is particularly so because they reinforce the aspirations of the Millennium Declaration as well as present a step towards the fulfilment of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

77. There have been important successes since 2002, including a significant reduction in the number of deaths of children due to measles, a sharp decline in the number of polio cases and a remarkable increase in primary school enrolment.

78. However, many challenges remain. Overall, most of the goals of the special session, and indeed the Millennium Development Goals, will not be achieved without a greater sense of urgency and an acceleration of proven interventions.

79. Member States should continue to take advantage of rapidly expanding opportunities in strategic global partnerships. They should also earnestly respond to increasing challenges, including those related to rising prices for basic food items, migration and climate change. Focused, effective support for early childhood care and development as well as the provision of clean water and improvements in hygiene and sanitation will be strategic in achieving improved health and nutrition outcomes for children. A renewed focus on gender equality and the quality of services continue to be key to achieving goals in education and child protection.

80. Altogether, common themes underlie the reasons for gaps in achievement of the goals of the special session. These include inadequate attention to the rights of children in the most vulnerable and marginalized sections of society.

81. Emergencies resulting from both man-made and natural causes also pose huge constraints on the achievement of international development goals. Measures to ensure and coordinate disaster prevention as well as rapid humanitarian response and reconstruction should be expedited.

82. Strengthening the capacity of States to expand and sustain the provision of essential services remains one of the most critical factors in achieving the goals of the special session on children. In its resolution on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (resolution 62/208), the General Assembly emphasized the need for national capacity-building. The implementation of high-impact interventions, as well as sustained efforts for systems development should be pursued simultaneously.

83. Filling funding gaps require attention by Governments and the international community. Recent advancements in resource mobilization, such as for combating HIV, indicate the importance of the timely provision of resources for the achievement of the goals of the special session. At the same time, a renewed focus on communication for development should be pursued more urgently.

84. The key challenge for the forthcoming period is to build on the momentum generated since the special session, and its five-year commemoration in December 2007, to create a greater sense of urgency in communities and Governments and among international development actors to ensure the achievement of the goals for children.

85. The journey to 2010 and 2015, the years in which most targets for children converge, will be demanding. Achieving the goals will require a greater sense of urgency to address surmountable obstacles. Failure to achieve the goals adopted at the special session on children will significantly undermine efforts towards realizing the aspirations of the Millennium Declaration. This calls for scaled up responses by Governments, increased commitments from the international community and broader and more focused partnerships to achieve the goals of the special session on children.